



3 1761 04019 7022

HANDBOUND
AT THE



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO PRESS



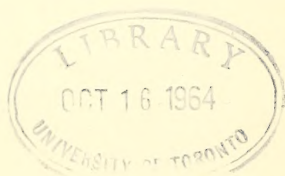
Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

Gilbert Norwood. 4082

I

THE WORKS
OF
ALFRED TENNYSON

PR
5550
E78



934525

(The rights of translation and of reproduction are reserved)

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| TO THE QUEEN | 1 |
| JUVENILIA | 2 |
| Claribel | 2 |
| Nothing will Die | 2 |
| All Things will Die | 3 |
| The Kraken | 3 |
| Song | 3 |
| Lilian | 4 |
| Isabel | 4 |
| Mariana | 5 |
| To — | 6 |
| Madeline | 6 |
| Song—The Owl | 7 |
| Second Song—To the Same | 7 |
| Recollections of the Arabian Nights | 8 |
| Ode to Memory | 10 |
| Song | 12 |
| A Character | 12 |
| The Poet | 12 |
| The Poet's Mind | 13 |
| The Sea-Fairies | 14 |
| The Deserted House | 15 |
| The Dying Swan | 15 |
| A Dirge | 16 |
| Love and Death | 17 |
| The Ballad of Oriana | 17 |
| Circumstance | 18 |
| The Merman | 18 |
| The Mermaid | 19 |
| Adeline | 20 |
| Margaret | 21 |
| Eleinore | 22 |
| 'My life is full of weary days' | 24 |
| Early Sonnets | 24 |
| 1. Sonnet to — | 24 |
| 2. Sonnet to J. M. K. | 24 |
| 3. 'Mine be the strength of spirit' | 25 |
| 4. Alexander | 25 |
| 5. Buonaparte | 25 |
| 6. Poland | 26 |
| 7. 'Caress'd or chidden' | 26 |
| 8. 'The form, the form alone is eloquent' | 26 |
| 9. 'Wan sculptor, weepest thou' | 27 |
| 10. 'If I were loved, as I desire to be' | 27 |
| 11. The Bridesmaid | 27 |
| THE LADY OF SHALOTT, AND OTHER POEMS: | |
| The Lady of Shalott | 28 |
| Mariana in the South | 30 |
| The Two Voices | 31 |
| The Miller's Daughter | 39 |
| Fatima | 42 |

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| THE LADY OF SHALOTT, &c.— <i>continued</i> | |
| Enone | 42 |
| The Sisters | 47 |
| To — | 47 |
| The Palace of Art | 48 |
| Lady Clara Vere de Vere | 53 |
| The May Queen | 54 |
| New-Year's Eve | 55 |
| Conclusion | 57 |
| The Lotos-Eaters | 59 |
| Choric Song | 60 |
| A Dream of Fair Women | 62 |
| The Blackbird | 68 |
| The Death of the Old Year | 68 |
| To J. S. | 69 |
| On a Mourner | 70 |
| 'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease' | 71 |
| 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights' | 71 |
| 'Love thou thy land' | 72 |
| The Goose | 73 |
| ENGLISH IDYLLS AND OTHER POEMS: | 74 |
| The Epic | 74 |
| Morte d'Arthur | 75 |
| The Gardener's Daughter; or, the Pictures | 81 |
| Dora | 86 |
| Audley Court | 89 |
| Walking to the Mail | 90 |
| Edwin Morris; or, the Lake | 92 |
| St. Simeon Stylites | 95 |
| The Talking Oak | 99 |
| Love and Duty | 104 |
| The Golden Year | 105 |
| Ulysses | 107 |
| England and America in 1782 | 108 |
| Tithonus | 109 |
| Locksley Hall | 110 |
| Godiva | 116 |
| The Day-Dream | 117 |
| Prologue | 117 |
| The Sleeping Palace | 118 |
| The Sleeping Beauty | 119 |
| The Arrival | 119 |
| The Revival | 119 |
| The Departure | 120 |
| Moral | 120 |
| L'Envoi | 121 |
| Epilogue | 121 |
| Amphion | 122 |
| St. Agnes' Eve | 123 |
| Sir Galahad | 123 |
| Edward Gray | 125 |

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue | 125 |
| Lady Clare | 128 |
| The Captain | 130 |
| The Lord of Burleigh | 130 |
| The Voyage | 132 |
| Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere | 133 |
| A Farewell | 134 |
| The Beggar Maid | 134 |
| The Eagle | 134 |
| 'Move eastward, happy earth, and leave' | 134 |
| 'Come not, when I am dead' | 134 |
| The Letters | 135 |
| The Vision of Sin | 135 |
| To —, after reading a Life and Letters | 139 |
| To E. L., on his Travels in Greece | 139 |
| 'Break, break, break' | 139 |
| The Poet's Song | 140 |
| ENOCH ARDEN, AND OTHER POEMS : | |
| Enoch Arden | 140 |
| The Brook | 156 |
| Aymer's Field | 160 |
| Sea Dreams | 175 |
| The Golden Supper | 181 |
| Lucretius | 188 |
| THE PRINCESS : A MEDLEY | |
| Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington | 193 |
| The Third of February, 1852 | 254 |
| The Charge of the Light Brigade | 259 |
| Ode sung at the Opening of the International Exhibition | 260 |
| A Welcome to Alexandra | 261 |
| A Welcome to Her Royal Highness Marie Alexandrovna, Duchess of Edinburgh | 262 |
| The Grandmother | 263 |
| Northern Farmer. Old Style | 266 |
| Northern Farmer. New Style | 268 |
| The Daisy | 270 |
| To the Rev. F. D. Maurice | 272 |
| Will | 272 |
| In the Valley of Caunteretz | 273 |
| In the Garden at Swainston | 273 |
| The Flower | 273 |
| Requiescat | 274 |
| The Sailor Boy | 274 |
| The Islet | 274 |
| The Spiteful Letter | 275 |
| Literary Squabbles | 275 |
| The Victim | 275 |
| Wages | 277 |
| The Higher Pantheism | 277 |
| The Voice and the Peak | 278 |
| 'Flower in the crannied wall' | 278 |
| A Dedication | 278 |
| EXPERIMENTS : | |
| Boádicea | 279 |
| In Quantity | 281 |
| Specimen of a Translation of the Iliad in Blank Verse | 282 |
| THE WINDOW; OR, THE SONG OF THE WRENS | |
| The Window | 282 |
| On the Hill | 282 |

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| THE WINDOW, &c.—continued | |
| At the Window | 283 |
| Gone | 283 |
| Winter | 283 |
| Spring | 283 |
| The Letter | 284 |
| No Answer | 284 |
| The Answer | 84 |
| Ay | 285 |
| When | 285 |
| Marriage Morning | 285 |
| IN MEMORIAM A. H. H. | 286 |
| MAUD : A MONODRAMA | 330 |
| IDYLLS OF THE KING : | |
| Dedication | 354 |
| The Coming of Arthur | 355 |
| The Round Table | 365 |
| Gareth and Lynette | 365 |
| Geraint and Enid | 392 |
| Merlin and Vivien | 425 |
| Lancelot and Elaine | 443 |
| The Holy Grail | 469 |
| Pelias and Ettarre | 486 |
| The Last Tournament | 498 |
| Guinevere | 513 |
| The Passing of Arthur | 525 |
| To the Queen | 534 |
| QUEEN MARY | 536 |
| HAROLD | 619 |
| THE LOVER'S TALE | 666 |
| BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS : | |
| The First Quarrel | 694 |
| Rizpah | 696 |
| The Northern Cobbler | 699 |
| The Revenge : A Ballad of the Fleet | 702 |
| The Sisters | 705 |
| The Village Wife ; or, the Entail | 710 |
| In the Children's Hospital | 714 |
| Dedicatory Poem to the Princess Alice | 716 |
| The Defence of Lucknow | 716 |
| Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham | 719 |
| Columbus | 723 |
| The Voyage of Maeldune | 728 |
| De Profundis : The Two Greetings | 731 |
| The Human Cry | 732 |
| SONNETS : | |
| Prefatory Sonnet to the 'Nineteenth Century' | 732 |
| To the Rev. W. H. Brookfield | 733 |
| Montenegro | 733 |
| To Victor Hugo | 733 |
| TRANSLATIONS, ETC. | |
| Battle of Brunanburh | 734 |
| Achilles over the Trench | 736 |
| To the Princess Frederica of Hanover on her Marriage | 737 |
| Sir John Franklin | 737 |
| To Dante | 737 |

TO THE QUEEN.

REVEREND, beloved—O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—

' By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chapters, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day !
May children of our children say,
' She wrought her people lasting good ;

' Her court was pure ; her life serene ;
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;

' And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

JUVENILIA.

CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

I.

Where Claribel low-lieth
The lutescent pause and die,
Laying the rose-leaves fall :
Her thimble-rose oak-tree sigheth,
Thick leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

II.

At eves the lutele boometh
Athwart the thicket lone :
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone :
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.
Her wing the lintwhite swelleth,
The silver-voiced nuthatch dwelleth,
The callow thristle lispeth,
The slumbrous wave outwelleteth,
The babbling rannel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth.

NOTHING WILL DIE.

When will the stream be weary of
blowing
Under my eye?
When will the wind be weary of blowing
Over the sky?

When will the clouds be weary of fleeting?
When will the heart be weary of beating?

And nature die?

Never, oh ! never, nothing will die ;

The stream flows,

The wind blows,

The cloud fleets,

The heart beats,

Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;

All things will change

Thro' eternity.

'Tis the world's winter ;

Autumn and summer

Are gone long ago ;

Earth is dry to the centre,

But spring, a new comer,

A spring rich and strange,

Shall make the winds blow

Round and round,

Thro' and thro',

Here and there,

Till the air

And the ground

Shal be fill'd with life anew.

The world was never made ;

It will change, but it will not fade.

So let the wind range ;

For even and morn

Ever will be

Thro' eternity.

Nothing was born ;

Nothing will die ;

All things will change.

ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

Clearly the blue river climbs in its
flowing

Under my eye :

Warily and bravely the south winds are
blowing

Over the sky.

One after another the white clouds are
fleeing ;

Every heart this May morning in joyance
is beating

Full merrily ;

Yet all things must die.

The stream will cease to flow ;

The wind will cease to blow ;

The clouds will cease to fleet :

The heart will cease to beat ;

For all things must die.

All things must die.

Spring will come never more.

Oh ! vanity !

Death waits at the door.

See ! our friends are all forsaking

The wine and the merrymaking.

We are call'd—we must go.

Laid low, very low,

In the dark we must lie.

The merry glees are still ;

The voice of the bird

Shall no more be heard,

Not the wind on the hill.

Oh ! misery !

Hark ! death is calling

While I speak to ye,

The jaw is falling,

The red cheek paling,

The strong limbs failing ;

Ice with the warm blood mixing ;

The eyeballs fixing.

Nine times goes the passing bell :

Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth

Had a birth,

As all men know,

Long ago.

And the old earth must die.

So let the south winds range,

And the blue wave beat the shore ;

For even and morn

Ye will never see

Thro' eternity.

All things were born.

Ye will come never more,

For all things must die.

THE KRAKEN.

Below the thunders of the upper deep ;

Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,

His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep

The Kraken sleepeth : faintest sunlights

flee

About his shadowy sides : above him swell

Huge sponges of millennial growth and

height ;

And far away into the sickly light,

From many a wondrous grot and secret cell

Unnumber'd and enormous polypi

Winnow with giant arms the slumbering

green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie

Battening upon huge seaworms in his

sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep ;

Then once by man and angels to be seen,

In roaring he shall rise and on the surface

die.

SONG.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,

Leaning upon the ridged sea,

Breathed low around the rolling earth

With mellow preludes, 'We are free.'

The streams through many a lilled row
 Down-carolling to the crisped sea,
 Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
 A'ween the blossoms, 'We are free.'

LILLIAN.

I.

Airy, fairy Lilian,
 Flitting, fairy Lilian,
 When I ask her if she love me,
 Claps her tiny hands above me,
 Laughing all she can ;
 She'll not tell me if she love me,
 Cruel little Lilian.

II.

When my passion seeks
 Pleasance in love-sighs,
 She, looking thro' and thro' me
 Thoroughly to undo me,
 Smiling, never speaks :
 So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
 From beneath her gather'd wimple
 Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
 Till the lightning laughter-dimple
 The baby-roses in her cheeks ;
 Then away she flies.

III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !
 Gaiety without eclipse
 Wearieth me, May Lilian :
 Thro' my very heart it thrilleth
 When from crimson-threaded lips
 Silver-ripple laughter trilleth :
 Prythee weep, May Lilian.

IV.

Praying all I can,
 If prayers will not assist thee,
 Airy Lilian,
 Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
 Fairly Lilian.

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,
 but fed
 With the clear-pointed flame of chas-
 ity,
 Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
 Pure vestal thoughts in the trans-
 lucent fane
 Of her still spirit ; locks not wide-
 dispread,
 Madonna-wise on either side her
 head ;
 Sweet lips whereon perpetually did
 reign
 The summer calm of golden charity,
 Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
 Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
 The stately flower of female fortitude,
 Of perfect wifehood and pure lowli-
 head.

II.

The intuitive decision of a bright
 And thorough-edged intellect to part
 Error from crime ; a prudence to
 withhold ;
 The laws of marriage character'd in
 gold
 Upon the blanched tablets of her heart ;
 A love still burning upward, giving light
 To read those laws ; an accent very low
 In blandishment, but a most silver flow
 Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
 Right to the heart and brain, tho' un-
 descried,
 Winning its way with extreme gen-
 tleness
 Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride ;
 A courage to endure and to obey ;
 A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,

Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;
A clear stream flowing with a mucky
one,

Ill in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer
light

The veal'd eadles of its wayward
brother :

A leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had
fallen quite

With cluster'd flower-bells and ambro-
sial orbs

Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each
other—

Shadow forth thee :—the world hath
not another

(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of
thee,

And thou of God in thy great charity)

Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

' Mariana in the moated grange.'

Measure for Measure.

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots

Were thickly crusted, one and all :

The rusted nails fell from the knots

That held the pear to the gable-wall.

The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :

Unlifted was the clinking latch :

Weeded and worn the ancient thatch

Upon the lonely moated grange.

She only said, ' My life is dreary,

He cometh not,' she said ;

She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !'

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;

Her tears fell ere the dews were
dried ;

She could not look on the sweet heaven,

Later at noon or eventide.

After the fluting of the lute,

When thickest dark did trance the
sky,

She drew her casement-curtain up,

And glanced athwart the glooming flats.

She only said, ' The night is dreary,

He cometh not,' she said ;

She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !'

Upon the middle of the night,

Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :

The cock sung out an hour ere light :

From the dark fen the oxen's low

Came to her : without hope of change,

In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,

Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed
morn

About the lonely moated grange.

She only said, ' The day is dreary,

He cometh not,' she said ;

She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall

A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,

And o'er it many, round and small,

The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,

All silver-green with gnarled bark :

For leagues no other tree did mark

The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, ' My life is dreary,

He cometh not,' she said ;

She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,

I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the still winds were up and away
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the party shadow sway.
 But when the moon was very low,
 And wild winds bound within their
 coil,
 The shadow of the poplar fell
 Upon her back, across her brow.
 She only said, 'The night is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said ;
 She wept, 'I am weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !'

All day within the dreamy house,
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;
 The little fly buzz'd in the pane ; the mouse
 Patrol'd the mumbering windows
 and floor'd,
 Or from the crevice peep'd about.
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
 Old voices called her from without.
 She only said, 'My life is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said ;
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !'

The parrot's chirrup on the roof,
 The dew-drop falling, and the sound
 Which to the wooing wind aloof
 The poplar made, did all condemn !
 Her senses but must she loathed the
 hour
 When the thick-misted penitents lay
 A-hwart the chambers, and the day
 Was sloping toward his western tower.
 Then, said she, 'I am very dreary,
 He will not come,' she said ;
 She wept, 'I am weary, weary,
 Oh God, had I were dead !'

TO —.

I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful
 scorn,
 Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain
 The knots that tangle human creeds,
 The wounding cords that bind and strain
 The heart until it bleeds,
 Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
 Roof not a glance so keen as thine :
 If aught of prophecy be mine,
 Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;
 Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow :
 Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now
 With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
 Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords
 Can do away that ancient lie ;
 A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
 Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
 Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,
 Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
 Until she be an athlete bold,
 And weary with a finger's touch
 Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;
 Like that strange angel which of old,
 Until the breaking of the light,
 Wrestled with wandering Israel,
 Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,
 And heaven's mazed signs stood still
 In the dim tract of Penueel.

MADELINE.

I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,
 No tranced summer calm is thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.

Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,
 Soften glances, sweet and strange,
 Delicious spites and darling angers,
 And airy forms of flitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore.
 Revelings deep and clear are thine
 Of wealthy smiles: but who may know
 Whether smile or frown be fleetest?
 Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
 Who may know?
 Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
 Light-glooming over eyes divine,
 Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof
 From one another,
 Each to each is dearest brother;
 Hues of the silken sheeny woof
 Momently shot into each other.
 All the mystery is thine;
 Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore,
 Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,
 By veering passion fann'd,
 About thee breaks and dances:
 When I would kiss thy hand,
 The flush of anger'd shame
 O'erflows thy warmer glances,
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown:
 But when I turn away,
 Thou, willing me to stay,
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;
 But, looking fixedly the while,
 All my bounding heart entanglest
 In a golden-netted smile;

Then in madness and in bliss,
 If my lips should dare to kiss,
 Thy taper fingers amorously,
 Again thou blushest angerly;
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown.

SONG—THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
 And dew is cold upon the ground,
 And the far-off stream is dumb,
 And the whirring sail goes round,
 And the whirring sail goes round;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
 And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
 And the cock hath sung beneath the
 thatch
 Twice or thrice his roundelay,
 Twice or thrice his roundelay;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,
 Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,
 Which upon the dark afloat,
 So took echo with delight,
 So took echo with delight,
 That her voice untuneful grown,
 Wears all day a fainter tone.

II.

I would mock thy chaunt anew
 But I cannot mimick it;

Not a whit of thy twiloo,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 These to woo to thy twiloo,
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
 ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew
 free

In the silken sail of infancy,
 The tide of time flow'd back with me,
 The forward-flowing tide of time ;
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,
 By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
 High-walled gardens green and old ;
 True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
 The low and bloomed foliage, drove
 The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
 The citron-shadows in the blue :
 By garden porches on the brim,
 The costly doors flung open wide,
 Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
 And broider'd sofas on each side :
 In sooth it was a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard
 The outlet, did I turn away
 The boat-head down a broad canal
 From the main river sluiced, where all
 The sloping of the moon-lit sward
 Was damask-work, and deep inlay
 Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
 Adown to where the water slept.

A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
 Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
 My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
 Until another night in night
 I enter'd, from the clearer light,
 Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
 Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
 Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the
 dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
 Is rounded to as clear a lake.
 From the green rivage many a fall
 Of diamond rillets musical,
 Thro' little crystal arches low
 Down from the central fountain's flow
 Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
 The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn
 A walk with vary-colour'd shells
 Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
 All round about the fragrant marge
 From fluted vase, and brazen urn
 In order, eastern flowers large,
 Some dropping low their crimson bells
 Half-closed, and others studded wide
 With disks and tiars, fed the time
 With odour in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
 In closest coverture upsprung,

The living airs of middle night
 Died round the ballad as he sung :
 Not he : but something which possess'd
 The darkness of the world, delight,
 Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
 Ceasing not, mingled, unrepres'd,
 Apart from place, withholding time,
 But flattering the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
 Shimmer'd : the solemn palms were
 ranged
 Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
 A sudden splendour from behind
 Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
 And, flowing rapidly between
 Their interspaces, counterchanged
 The level lake with diamond-plots
 Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
 Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
 Grew darker from that under-flame :
 So, leaping lightly from the boat,
 With silver anchor left afloat,
 In marvel whence that glory came
 Upon me, as in sleep I sank
 In cool soft turf upon the bank,
 Entranced with that place and time,
 So worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn--
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
 And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
 Full of the city's stilly sound,
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
 The stately cedar, tamarisks,
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks

Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares
 From the long alley's latticed shade
 Emerged, I came upon the great
 Pavilion of the Caliphat.
 Right to the carven ceiling floors,
 Flung inward over spangled floors,
 Broad-based flights of marble stairs
 Ran up with golden balustrade,
 After the fashion of the time,
 And humour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
 As with the quintessence of flame,
 A million tapers flaring bright
 From twisted silvers look'd to shame
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
 Upon the mooned domes aloof
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof
 Of night new-risen, that marvellous
 time
 To celebrate the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
 Serene with argent-lidded eyes
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
 Tressed with redolent ebony,
 In many a dark delicious curl,
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;
 The sweetest lady of the time,
 Well worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich

Throne of the massive ore, from which
 Down drench'd, in many a floating fall,
 Is rlanded and diaper'd
 With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
 Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
 With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
 I see him—in his youthful prime,
 THE GOOD HARBOUR, ANNEVILLE.

ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESS TO —.

I.

Thou who stealest fire,
 From the fountains of the past,
 Do glorify the present; oh, haste,
 Meet my low desire!
 Strengthen me, enlighten me!
 I faint in this obscurity,
 I hope dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come to me, thou monarch of late,
 Flinging the gloom of yesternight
 On the white day; but robed in soften'd
 Of orient state.
 Whilome thou camest with the morning
 mist,
 Like as a maid, whose stately brow
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn have
 When, she, as thou,
 Lay on her floating locks the lovely
 Overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
 Of winter green, giving safe pledge of
 Which in wintertide shall star
 The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning
 mist,
 And with the evening cloud,
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
 open breast
 (Those peerless flowers which in the
 rudest wind
 Never grow sere,
 When rooted in the garden of the mind,
 Because they are the earliest of the year)
 Nor was the night thy shroud.
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant
 Hope.
 The eddying of her garments caught from
 thee
 The light of thy great presence; and the
 cope
 Of the half-attain'd futurity,
 Tho' deep not fathomless,
 Was cloven with the million stars which
 tremble
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.
 Small thought was there of life's distress;
 For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could
 dull
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
 beautiful:
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
 Listening the lordly music flowing from
 The illimitable years.
 O strengthen me, enlighten me!
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
 eyes!
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunting
 vines

Unto mine amber eye,

Divinest Memory!

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
Which ever surmises and shines

A pillar of white light upon the soil
Of purple cliffs, itself deserted:

Come from the woods that hilt the gray
hill-side,

The seven elms, the poplars first

Thou stand beside my father's door,

And chiefly from the brook that loves

To purr o'er matted moss and ribbed sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,

Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,

In every elbow and turn,

The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland

O! hither lead thy feet!

Four round mine ears the livelong bleat

Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattle
folds.

Upon the ridged wolds,

When the first matin-song hath waken'd
loud

Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,

What time the amber morn

Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung
cloud.

3.

Large dew-drops clothe the measured eye

To the young spirit present

When first she is wed:

And like a bride of old

In triumph led,

With music and sweet showers

Of festal flowers,

Unto the dwelling she must sway.

Well hast thou done, great artist Me-
mory,

In setting round thy first experiment

With royal frame-work of wrought
gold:

Needs must thou dearly love thy first
essay,

And foremost in thy various gallery

Place it, whose sweetest sunlight falls

Upon the stained walls;

For the discovery

And newness of thine art so pleased thee,

That all which thou hast drawn of fained

Or boldest since, but lightly weighs

With thee unto the love thou bear'st

The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,

Ever retiring thou dost gaze

On the prime labour of thine early

days:

No matter what the search might be,

Whether the high field on the bushless

Pike,

Or even a sand-built ridge

Of heaped hills that mound the sea,

Overblown with murmurs harsh,

Or even a lowly cottage whence we

Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-
mous marsh,

Where from the frequent bridge,

Like emblems of infinity,

The trenched waters run from sky to

sky;

Or a garden bower'd close

With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,

Long alleys falling down to twilight grass,

Or opening upon level plots

Of crowned lilies, standing near

Purple-spiked lavender:

Whither in after life retired

From brawling storms,

From weary wind,

With youthful fancy re-inspired,

We may hold converse with all forms

Of the many-sided mind.

And thus, when passion hath not blinded,

Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,

Were how much better than to own

A crown, a sceptre, and a throne!

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
I fade in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

SONG.

I.

A SILENT MORN'G the year's last hours
Dwelling in these yellowing bowers :
To himself he talks ;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh.

In the walks ;
Earthward he boweth the heavy

of the maddening flowers :
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh
repose

An hour before death ;

My very heart faints and my whole soul
grieves
At the moist rich smell of the rotting
leaves,

And the breath
Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky
At night he said, 'The wanderings

Of this most intricate Universe
Teach me the nothingness of things,'
Yet could not all creation pierce
Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty : that the dull
Saw no divinity in grass,
Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;
Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,
And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue : not the gods
More purely, when they wish to charm
Pallas and Juno sitting by :
And with a sweeping of the arm,
And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour
He canvass'd human mysteries,
And trod on silk, as if the winds
Blew his own praises in his eyes,
And stood aloof from other minds
In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
Himself unto himself he sold :
Upon himself himself did feed :
Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
And other than his form of creed,
With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above ;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn
of scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good
and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul.

The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he
threaded

The secretest walks of fame :

The viewless arrows of his thoughts were
headed
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver
tongue,

And of so fierce a flight,

From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
Them earthward till they lit ;

Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
flower,
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth
new

Where'er they fell, behold,

Like to the mother plant in semblance,
grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of truth,

To throng with stately blooms the breath-
ing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.

Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
world

Like one great garden show'd,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise

Her beautiful bold brow,

When rites and forms before his burning
eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;

But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in
flame

WISDOM, a name to shake

All evil dreams of power—a sacred name
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,

But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*
word
She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind

With thy shallow wit :

VEX not thou the poet's mind ;

For thou canst not fathom it.

Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river ;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not near ;
All thy pleasures holy ground ;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
 Come not here.
If holy water will I pour
Into every spiey flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around,
The flowers would faint at your cruel
 sound.
In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants,
Whom you stand you cannot hear
 I saw the groves within
 The wild-bird's din.
In the heart of the garden the merry bird
 is mute,
It would fall to the ground if you came
 in.
In the middle heap a fountain
 I see flash lightning,
 Ever brightening
With a low melodious thunder ;
All day and all night it is ever drawn
 From the brain of the purple mountain
 Which stands in the distance yonder :
It springs on a level of lowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from Heaven
 above,
And it sings a song of undying love ;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and
 full,
You never would hear it ; your ears are
 so dull ;
So keep where you are : you are foul
 with sin ;
It would shrink to the earth if you came
 in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the running
 foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
 prest
To little harps of gold ; and while they
 mused
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the middle
 sea.
Whither away, whither away, whither
 away ? fly no more.
Whither away from the high green field,
 and the happy blossoming shore ?
Day and night to the billow the fountain
 calls :
Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
From wandering over the lea :
Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
And thick with white bells the clover-hill
 swells
High over the full-toned sea :
O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me :
Hither, come hither and frolic and play ;
Here it is only the mew that wails ;
We will sing to you all the day :
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
For here are the blissful downs and dales,
And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
And the spangle dances in bight and
 bay,
And the rainbow forms and flies on the
 land
Over the islands free ;
And the rainbow lives in the curve of the
 sand ;
Hither, come hither and see ;

And the rainbow hangs on the poising
wave,

And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,
And sweet shall your welcome be :

O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
For merry brides are we :

We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak sweet
words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
With pleasure and love and jubilee :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
When the sharp clear twang of the golden
chords

Runs up the ridged sea.

Who can light on as happy a shore
All the world o'er, all the world o'er?

Wither away? listen and stay : mariner,
mariner, fly no more.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away
Side by side,
Leaving door and windows wide :
Careless tenants they !

II.

All within is dark as night :
In the windows is no light ;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

III.

Close the door, the shutters close,
Or thro' the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark deserted house.

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth
Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell ;

But in a city glorious—

A great and distant city—have bought
A mansion incorruptible.

Would they could have stayed with us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
Wide, wild, and open to the air,
Which had built up everywhere
An under-roof of doleful gray.
With an inner voice the river ran,
Adown it floated a dying swan,
And loudly did lament.
It was the middle of the day.
Ever the weary wind went on,
And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
And white against the cold-white sky,
Shone out their crowning snows.
One willow over the river wept,
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh :
Above in the wind was the swallow,
Chasing itself at its own wild will,
And far thro' the marish green and
still
The tangled water-courses slept,
Shot over with purple, and green, and
yellow.

III.

THE wild swan's death-lymn took the soul
Of that waste place with joy
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
The warble was low, and full and clear ;
And floating about the under-sky,
Prevailing in weakness, the croonach
stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;
 But anon her awful jubilant voice,
 With a music strange and manifold,
 Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;
 As when a mighty people rejoice
 With shawms, and with cymbals, and
 harps of gold,
 And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd
 Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
 To the shepherd who watcheth the even-
 ing star.
 And the creeping mosses and clambering
 weeds,
 And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
 And the wavy swell of the sighing
 reefs,
 And the wave-worn horns of the echoing
 fords,
 And the silvery marish - flowers that
 tinge
 The desolate creeks and pools among,
 Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;
 Fold thy palms across thy breast,
 Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
 Let them rave.
 Shadows of the silver link
 Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

II.

Thou nor carest care nor slander ;
 Nothing but the small cold worm
 Fretteth thine enshrouded form.
 Let them rave.
 Light and shadow ever wander
 O'er the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;
 Chaunteth not the brooding bee
 Sweeter tones than calumny ?
 Let them rave.
 Thou wilt never raise thine head
 From the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;
 The woodbine and eglaree
 Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.
 Let them rave.
 Rain makes music in the tree
 O'er the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
 Bramble roses, faint and pale,
 And long purples of the dale.
 Let them rave.
 These in every shower creep
 Thro' the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;
 The frail bluebell peereth over
 Rare broidry of the purple clover.
 Let them rave.
 Kings have no such couch as thine,
 As the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :
 God's great gift of speech abused
 Makes thy memory confused :
 But let them rave.
 The balm-cricket carols clear
 In the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty sun was gather-
ing light

Love paced the fiery floor of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;
When, turning round a cassin, full in view,
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his sight :
'You must begone,' said Death, 'these
watts are mine.'

Love wept and spread his sheeny vans
for flight ;

Yet ere he partet said, 'This hour is
thine :

Thou art the shadow of life, and as the
tree

stands in the sun and shadows all be-
neath,

So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of death ;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall
fall,

But I shall reign for ever over all.'

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

MY heart is wasted with my woe.

Oriana.

There is no rest for me below.

Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with
snow,

And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow.

Oriana.

Mine I waister round for.

Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,

Oriana.

At midnight the rook was cawing,

Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the crack of battle going.

Oriana :

Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,

Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,

Oriana.

Ere I rode into the fight,

Oriana,

While blissful tones blineted my sight:

By star-shine and by moonlight,

Oriana,

I to thee my troth did plight,

Orian

She stood upon the castle wall,

Oriana :

She watch'd my crest among them all,

Oriana :

She saw me fight, she heard me call.

When forth there stept a foeman tall,

Oriana,

Atween me and the castle wall,

Oriana.

'Th' bitter arrow went aside,

Oriana :

The false, false arrow went aside.

Oriana :

The damned arrow glanced aside,

And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,

Oriana !

Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride.

Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space.

Oriana.

Loud, loud rung out the bugle's woe,

Oriana.

Oh ! deathful stalk were dead apace.

The battle deepen'd in its place,

Oriana ;

But I was down upon my face,

Oriana.

They glow, — how could I see where I lay,

Oriana!

How could I see and come away,

Oriana?

How could I look upon the day?

They glow, — how could I see where I lay,

Oriana!

Why should these trails be made of clay,

Oriana!

A breaking heart that will not break,

Oriana!

O pain, pain like a sword and steel,

Oriana!

How comes, — for thou dost me speak,

And thus the tears run down my cheek,

Oriana!

Whom dost thou? whom dost thou seek,

Oriana?

I cry aloud: none hear my cries,

Oriana!

Thy name, O woe, are and the skies,

Oriana!

I feel the heat of blood arise

Up from my heart unto my eyes,

Oriana!

Within thy heart my arrow lies,

Oriana!

O good God! O cursed blow!

Oriana!

O lamp that but just now,

Oriana!

All night thou dost seem to flow

Round me in my utter woe,

Oriana!

A weary, weary, way I go,

Oriana!

Where Neptun's winds pipe down the sea,

Oriana!

I will, I almost think of thee,

Oriana!

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,

I dare not die and come to thee.

Oriana!

I hear the roaring of the sea,

Oriana!

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbour villages

Playing mad pranks along the heathy lea;

Two strangers meeting at a festival;

Two lovers whispering by an orchard

wall;

Two lives bound fast in one with golden

case;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray

church-tower,

Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blossom-

somed;

Two children in one hamlet born and

bred;

So runs the round of life from hour to

hour.

THE MERMAN.

I.

WHO would be

A merman bold,

Sitting alone,

Singing alone

Under the sea,

With a crown of gold,

On a throne?

II.

I would be a merman bold,

I would sit and sing the whole of the day;

I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of

power;

But at night I would roam abroad and play

With the mermaids in and out of the

rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white
flower ;

And holding them back by their flowing
locks

I would kiss them often under the sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly ;

And then we would wander away, away

To the uttermost — my gloves straight and
high,

Chasing each other merrily.

III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;
But the wave would make music above
us afar —

Low thunder and light in the magic night —
Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,
Call to each other and whoop and cry

All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with starry spangles
and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands be-
tween,

All night, merrily, merrily :

But I would throw to them back in mine
Turkis and agate and almondine :

Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh ! what a happy life were mine

Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;

We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

Wife would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,

Combing her hair

Under the sea,

In a golden curl

With a comb of pearl,

On a glassine ?

II.

I would be a mermaid fair :

I would sing to myself the whole of the
day ;

With a comb of pearl I would comb my
hair ;

And still as I comb'd I would sing and
say,

' Who is it loves me ? who loves not me ?'

I would comb my hair till my ringlets
would fall

Low adown, low adown,

From under my starry sea-bud crown

Low adown and around,

And I should look like a fountain of gold
Springing alone

With a shrill inner sound,

Over the throne

In the midst of the hall ;

Till that great sea-snake under the sea

From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps

Would slowly trail himself sevenfold

Round the hall where I sat, and look at
at the gate

With his large calm eyes for the love of
me.

And all the mermen under the sea

Would feel their immortality

Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III.

But at night I would wander away, away,

I would fling on each side my low-
flowing locks,

And lightly vault from the throne and play

With the mermen in and out of the
toggles

We would run to and fro, and hide and
seek,

On the barren, sun-wildly in the crumpled
shell,

Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea,

But if any came near I would call, and
scream,

And show the steep like a wave I would
leap

From the dimmest ledges that fall from
the dells ;

For I would not be kiss'd by all who
would list,

Of the kind merry mortals under the
rocks,

They would woo me, and woo me, and
woo me,

In the purple twilights under the sea ;

But the king of them all would carry
me,

Win me, and win me, and marry me,

In the branching jaspers under the sea ;

For in all the dry pied things that be

In the hush'd mosses under the sea

Would not sound my silver feet silently,

All looking up for the love of me.

And if I would carol aloud, from aloft
All things that are forked, and hoar'd,
and soft

Would hum out from the hollow spheres of
the sea.

All looking down for the love of me.

ADELINE.

I.

Mystery of mystery,

Faintly smiling Adeline,

Source of earth not all divine,

Now solitary, me as yet,

How beyond expression far

Would thy floating dream have

Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes

Take the heart from out my breast.

Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,

Like a lily which the sun

Looks thro' in his sad decline,

And a rose-bush leans upon,

Thou that faintly smilest still,

As a Naiad in a well,

Looking at the set of day,

Or a phantom two hours old

Of a maiden past away,

Ere the placid lips be cold ?

Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,
Spiritual Adeline ?

III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?

Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?

For sure thou art not all alone.

Do beating hearts of salient springs

Keep measure with thine own ?

Hast thou heard the butterflies

What they say betwixt their wings ?

Or in stillest evenings

With what voice the violet woos

To his heart the silver dew ?

Or when little airs arise,

How the merry bluebell rings

To the mosses underneath ?

Hast thou look'd upon the breath

Of the lilies at sunrise ?

Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,

Some spirit of a crimson rose

In love with thee forgets to close

His curtains, wasting odorous sighs

All night long on darkness blind.

What aileth thee? whom waitest thou
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

V.

Leavest thou the doleful wail
 When thou gazest at the skies?
 Doth the low-tongued Orient
 Wander from the side of the morn,
 Dragg'ng with Sikkim's spire
 On thy pillow, lowly bent
 With melodious airs lovelorn,
 Breathing Light against thy face,
 While his locks a-drooping twined
 Round thy neck in subtle ring
 Make a circlet of rays,
 And ye talk together still,
 In the language wherewith Spring
 Letters cowslips on the hill?
 Hence that look and smile of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline.

MARGARET.

I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret,
 What lit your eyes with tearful power,
 Like moonlight on a falling shower?
 Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
 Of pensive thought and aspect pale,
 Your melancholy sweet and frail
 As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
 From the westward-winding flood,
 From the evening-lighted wood,
 From all things outward you have
 won
 A fearful grace, as tho' you stood
 Between the rainbow and the sun,
 The very smile before you speak,
 That dimples your transparent cheek,

Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
 The senses with a still delight
 Of dainty sorrow without sound,
 Like the reelex-amber round,
 Which the moon about her spreadeth,
 Moving thro' a dusky night.

II.

You love, remaining peacefully,
 To hear the murmur of the rill,
 But enter not the toil of life.
 Your spirit is the calmed sea,
 Laid by the tumult of the fight.
 You are the evening star, always
 Remaining betwixt dark and bright:
 I lull'd echoes of laborious day
 Come to you, gleams of mellow light
 Float by you on the verge of night.

III.

What can it matter, Margaret,
 What songs below the waning stars
 The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
 Sang looking thro' his prison bars?
 Exquisite Margaret, who can tell
 The last wild thought of Chatelet,
 Just ere the falling axe did part
 The burning brain from the true heart,
 Even in her sight he loved so well?

IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made
 And gave you on your natal day,
 Your sorrow, only sorrow's shield,
 Keeps real sorrow far away.
 You move not in such solitudes,
 You are not less divine,
 But more human in your moods,
 Than your twin-sister, Adeline.
 Your hair is darker, and your eyes
 Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue,
 And less aërially blue,
 But ever trembling thro' the dew
 Of dainty-woeful sympathies.

V.

O sweetest girl Margaret,
 O sweetest girl Margaret,
 Come down, come down, and lean
 Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves,
 Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :
 The sun is just about to set,
 The fading flames are tall and shady,
 And faint, rainy lights are seen,
 Shining on the leavy boughs.
 Rise from the heart of snow, lady,
 Where all day long you sat between
 Joy and woe, and whisper each
 Or only look across the lawn,
 Lying just below your bower-eaves,
 Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn
 Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

ELEÄNORE.

I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,
 Nor thine reveal'd themselves to English
 air,
 For there is nothing here,
 Whence, from the outward to the inward
 brought,
 Shouldst thou thy wily thoughts
 Feed from human neighbourhood.
 They went down, on a summer morn,
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood,
 Thy favourite fondness was not less'd
 With breezes from our oaken glade :
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious
 land
 Of lavish lights, and floating shades :
 And flattering thy childish thought
 The oriental fairy brought,
 At the moment of thy birth,
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,
 And the hearts of happy hills.

And shadow'd coves on a sunny shore,
 The choicest wealth of all the earth,
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
 To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
 Thro' half-open lattices
 Coming in the scented breeze,
 Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
 With whitest honey in fairy gar-
 dens cull'd—
 A glorious child, dreaming alone,
 In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
 With the hum of swarming bees
 Into dreamful slumber lul'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee?
 Summer herself should minister
 To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
 On golden salvers, or it may be,
 Youngest Autumn, in a bower
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and
 blinded
 With many a deep-hued bell-like
 flower
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air
 Sleepeth over all the heaven,
 And the crag that fronts the Even,
 All along the shadowy shore,
 Crimsons over an inland mere,
 Eleänore !

IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,
 How may measured words adore
 The full-flowing harmony
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,
 Eleänore ?
 The luxuriant symmetry
 Of thy floating gracefulness,
 Eleänore ?

Every turn and glance of thine,
 Every lincament divine,
 Eleänore,
 And the steady sunset glow,
 That stays upon thee? For in thee
 Is nothing sudden, nothing single;
 Like two streams of incense free
 From one censer in one shrine,
 Thought and motion mingle,
 Mingle ever. Motions flow
 To one another, even as tho'
 They were modulated so
 To an unheard melody,
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep
 Of richest pauses, evermore
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
 Who may express thee, Eleänore?

v.

I stand before thee, Eleänore;
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
 Daily and hourly, more and more.
 I muse, as in a trance, the while
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
 I muse, as in a trance, when'er
 The languors of thy love-deep eyes
 Float on to me. I would I were
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
 To stand apart, and to adore,
 Gazing on thee for evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore!

vi.

Sometimes, with most intensity
 Gazing, I seem to see
 Thought folded over thought, smiling
 asleep,
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
 But am as nothing in its light:
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,

Ev'n while we gaze on it,
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly
 grow
 To a full face, there like a sun remain
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,
 And draw itself to what it was before;
 So full, so deep, so slow,
 Thought seems to come and go
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.

vii.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
 Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
 Grow golden all about the sky;
 In thee all passion becomes passionless,
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,
 Losing his fire and active might
 In a silent meditation,
 Falling into a still delight,
 And luxury of contemplation:
 As waves that up a quiet cove
 Rolling slide, and lying still
 Shadow forth the banks at will:
 Or sometimes they swell and move,
 Pressing up against the land,
 With motions of the outer sea:
 And the self-same influence
 Controlleth all the soul and sense
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
 And so would languish evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore.

viii.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses
 unconfined,
 While the amorous, odorous wind
 Breathes low between the sunset and
 the moon;
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,

On silken cushions half reclined ;
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps ;
 While I muse upon thy face ;
 And a languid fire creeps
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon
 From thy rose-red lips MY name
 Floweth ; and then, as in a swoon,
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,
 My treacherous tongue faltereth,
 I lose my colour, I lose my breath,
 I drink the cup of a costly death,
 Brimm'd with delirious draughts of warm-
 er life.

I die with my delight, before
 I hear what I would hear from
 thee ;
 Yet tell my name again to me,
 I *would* be dying evermore,
 So dying ever, Elcänore.

I.

My life is full of weary days,
 But good things have not kept aloof,
 Nor wander'd into other ways :
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hand across the brink
 Of that deep grave to which I go :
 Shake hands once more : I cannot sink
 So far—far down, but I shall know
 Thy voice, and answer from below.

II.

When in the darkness over me
 The four-handed mole shall scrape,
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
 Nor wreath thy cap with doleful crape,
 But praise me near the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood
 Grow green beneath the showery gray,
 And rugged barks begin to bud,
 And thro' damp holts new-flush'd with
 may,
 Ring sudden scritchcs of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,
 And on my clay her darnel grow ;
 Come only, when the days are still,
 And at my headstone whisper low,
 And tell me if the woodbines blow.

EARLY SONNETS.

I.

TO — —.

As when with downcast eyes we muse
 and brood,
 And ebb into a former life, or seem
 To lapse far back in some confused dream
 To states of mystical similitude ;
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
 So that we say, 'All this hath been before,
 All this hath been, I know not when or
 where.'
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon your
 face,
 Our thought gave answer each to each, so
 true
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
 That tho' I knew not in what time or place,
 Methought that I had often met with you,
 And either lived in either's heart and
 speech.

II.

TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest

To save church harpies from the master's
feast :

Our dusted velvets have much need of
thee

Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,
Distant from some worm-eaten'd be-
mily ;

But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
To embattail and to wall about thy cause
With arm-woried psalms, hating to lack
The humming of the liturgy pulpital-
Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-
out clerk

Beats his desk below. Thou from
a throne

Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the
dark

Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and
mark

III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full and
free,

Like some broad river rushing down
alone,

With the selfsame impulse wherewith he
was thrown

From his loud fount upon the echoing
lea :—

Which with increasing might doth forward
flee

By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,
and isle,

And in the middle of the green salt sea
Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a
mile.

MINE be the power which ever to its
sway

Will win the wise at once, and by degrees
May into uncongenial spirits flow ;

Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of Florida
floats far away into the Northern seas

The lavish growths of southern Mexico.

IV.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong arm
arm'd himself

The throne of Persia, when her Satrap
bled

At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled
Beyond the Memnonian naphthalen,
dis-
graced

For ever—(thee (thy pathway sand-erased)
Gliding with equal crowns two serpents
led

Joyful to that palm-planted fountain'd
Ammonian Oasis in the waste.

There in a silent shade of laurel brown
Apart the Chamian Oracle divine

Shelter'd his unapproach'd mysteries :
High things were spoken there, unhand'd
down :

Only they saw thee from the secret
shrine

Returning with hot cheek and kindled
eyes.

V.

BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts
of oak,

Madman !—to chain with chains, and bind
with bands

That island queen who sways the floods
and lands

From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,
When from her wooden walls,—lit by
sure hands,—

With thunders, and with lightnings, and
with smoke,—

Peal after peal, the British battle broke,
Hurling the brine against the Coptic
sands.

We taught him lowlier moods, when El-
sinore
Heard the war rattle along the distant sea,
Rocking with shatter'd spars, with sudden
fires
Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him : late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd
with brims.

VI.

POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden
down,
And trampled under by the last and least
Of men ? The heart of Poland hath not
ceased
To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth
drown
The holds, and out of every smouldering
town
Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-
creased,
Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East
Transgress his ample bound to some new
crown :—
Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall
this thing be ?
How long this tyrannical Masovite
Oppress the region ?' Us, O Just and
Good,
Forgive, who weep'd when she was torn
in three ;
Us, who stand now, when we should aid
the right—
A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

VII.

Canst thou phision by the dancier hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Ere the Hope of Beauty's end would perch-
ance stand,

And run thro' every change of sharp
and flat ;
And away came and at her pillow sat,
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,
And chased away the still-recurring
gnat,
And woke her with a lay from fairy land.
But now they live with Beauty less and
less,
For Hope is other Hope and wanders
far,
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious
creeds ;
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,
That sets at twilight in a land of
reeds.

VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent !
A nobler yearning never broke her
rest
Than but to dance and sing, be gaily
drest,
And win all eyes with all accomplish-
ment :
Yet in the whirling dances as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment blest
To find my heart so near the beauteous
breast
That once had power to rob it of content.
A moment came the tenderness of tears,
The phantom of a wish that once could
move,
A ghost of passion that no smiles
restore—
For ah ! the slight coquette, she can-
not love,
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand years,
She still would take the praise, and
care no more.

IX.

WAS Sculptor, weep not thou to take the
 cast
 Of those dead lineaments that near thee
 lie?
 O sorrowest thou, pale Death, for the
 past,
 In painting some dead friend from
 memory?
 Weep on: beyond his object Love can
 last:
 His object lives: more cause to weep
 have I:
 My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast:
 No tears of love, but tears that Love
 can die.
 I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
 Nor care to sit beside her where she
 sits—
 Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,
 But breathe it into earth and close it up
 With secret death for ever, in the pits
 Which some green Christmas crams
 with weary bones.

X.

If I were loved, as I desire to be,
 What is there in the great sphere of the
 earth,
 And range of evil between death and
 birth,
 That I should fear,—if I were loved by
 thee?
 All the inner, all the outer world of pain
 Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if
 thou wert mine.
 As I have heard that, somewhere in the
 main,
 Fresh-water springs come up through
 bitter brine.

'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand
 with thee,
 To wait for death—mute—careless of all
 ills,
 Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge
 Of some new deluge from a thousand hills
 Flung leagues of rushing foam into the
 gorge
 Follow us, as far as an eye could see.

XI.

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was
 tied,
 Thine eyes so wept that they could
 hardly see;
 Thy sister smiled and said, 'No tears
 for me!
 A happy bridesmaid makes a happy
 bride.'
 And then, the couple standing side by
 side,
 Love lighted down between them full
 of glee,
 And over his left shoulder laugh'd at
 thee,
 'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride.'
 And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
 For while the tender service made thee
 weep,
 I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not
 hide,
 And prest thy hand, and knew the pres-
 return'd,
 And thought, 'My life is sick of single
 sleep.'
 O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride.'

Sometimes a curly sleep'd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come chivalry'd to view,
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent night
A funeral, with plumes and light,
And music, went to Camelot ;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed ;
' I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOOT from her tower-caves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun exulting thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the lance-creaves—
Of mail Sir Lancelot,
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see,
Hung in the golden Galaxy,
The brillia balls rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot ;
And from his horse's helmet'd side,
A ringlet silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the sun uncasual weather,
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,

The helmet and the helmet better,
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry crested light,
Some bearded men, in plumed light,
Hoves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot:
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
'Twas her that saw the first sight,
'Twas her that saw the first sight,
Sang Sir Lancelot

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot,
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side—
'The curse is from our side,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
When she came and found the boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the press the white
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some half-ruin'd temple—
The same half-ruin'd temple—

seeing all his own misdeeds—
 Walk a flimsy carpeted way
 Did the boat to Camelot,
 And for the doing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
 The [faint] stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
 That loosely flew to left and right—
 The leaves upon her falling light
 Thro' the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot ;
 And as the boat [faint] wound along
 The willow hill and field among,
 The [faint] boat [faint] singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Her hair was [faint], mournful, / body,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darkened wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
 For [faint] [faint] upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Came to tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
 And as the [faint] palace near
 Did the sound of [faint] doors;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 At the knights at Camelot :

But Lancelot mused a little space ;
 He said, 'She has a lovely face ;
 God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott.'

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,
 The house thro' all the level shines,
 Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
 And silent in its dusty vines :
 A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
 An empty river-bed before,
 And shallows on a distant shore,
 In glaring sand and inlets bright,
 But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,
 And 'Ave Mary,' night and morn,
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,
 From brow and bosom slowly down
 Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
 Her streaming curls of deepest brown
 To left and right, and made appear
 Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
 Her melancholy eyes divine,
 The home of woe without a tear.
 And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,
 'Madonna, sad is night and morn ;'
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

Till all the crimson changed, and past
 Into deep orange o'er the sea,
 Low on her knees herself she cast,
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;
 Complaining, 'Mother, give me grace
 To help me of my weary load.'
 And on the liquid mirror glow'd
 The clear perfection of her face.

'Is this the form,' she made her
moan,

'That won his praises night and
morn?'

And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake
alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.'

No bird would sing, no lamb would
bleat,

No ray of cloud would cross the vault,
But day increased from heat to heat,

On stony drought and steaming salt ;

Till now at noon she slept again,

And seem'd knee-deep in mountain
grass,

And heard her native breezes pass.

And ruides babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower moan,

And murmuring, as at night and
morn,

She thought, 'My spirit is here alone,
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

Dozing, she knew it was a dream :

She felt he was and was not there.

She woke : the babble of the stream

Full, and, without, the steady glare

Shrank one sick willow sere and small.

The river-bed was dusty-white ;

And all the furnace of the light

Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan

Move inward than at night or
morn,

'Sweet Mother, let me not here alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

And, rising, from her bosom drew

Old letters, breathing of her worth,

For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be
true,

To what is lowliest upon earth.'

An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look at her with slight, and say

'But ~~some~~ thy beauty flows away,
So be alone for evermore.'

'Ossual heart,' she changed her tone,

'And ~~forlorn~~ love, whose end is scorn,

Is this the end to be left alone,

To live forgotten, and die forlorn?'

But sometimes in the falling day

An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look into her eyes and say,

'But thou shalt be alone no more.'

And flaming downward over all

From heat to heat the day decreased,

And slowly rounded to the east

The one black shadow from the wall.

'The day to night,' she made her
moan,

'The day to night, the night to
morn,

And day and night I am left alone

To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

At eve a dry cicale sang,

There came a sound as of the sea ;

Backward the lattice-blind she flung,

And lean'd upon the balcony.

There all in spaces rosy-bright

Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,

And deepening thro' the silent spheres

Heaven over Heaven rose the night.

And weeping then she made her moan,

'The night comes on that knows not
morn,

When I shall cease to be all alone,

To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,

'Thou art so full of misery,

Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said ;
 ' Let me not cast in endless shade
 What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply ;
 ' To-day I saw the dragon-fly
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

' As inner impulse rent the veil
 Of his old husk : from head to tail
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

' He dried his wings : the game they
 flew :
 Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
 A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, ' When first the world began,
 Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
 And in the sixth she moulded man.

' So gave him mind, the lordliest
 Proportion, and, above the rest,
 Reason in the head and breast.'

Thence the silent voice replied ;
 ' So if blinded are you by your pride :
 Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

' This truth within thy mind rehearse,
 Thou art in a boundless universe
 The smallest better, boundless worse.

' Think you this mould of hopes and fears
 Could find no statelier than his peers
 In yonder hundred million spheres ?'

He spoke, and passed in my mind :
 ' That thou wert matter'd to the wind,
 Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

' Then did my response clearer fall :
 ' No compass'd of this earthly ball
 Is less kinder, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly :
 ' Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,
 Who'll weep for thy deficiency ?

' Or will one beam be less intense,
 When thy peculiar difference
 Is cancell'd in the world of sense ?'

I would have said, ' Thou canst not know,'
 But my full heart, that work'd below,
 Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :
 ' Thou art so steep'd in misery,
 Surely 'twere better not to be.

' Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
 Nor any train of reason keep :
 Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, ' The years with change advance :
 If I make dark my countenance,
 I shut my life from happier chance.

' Some turn this sickness yet might take,
 Ev'n yet.' But he : ' What drug can make
 A wither'd palsy cease to shake ?'

I wept, ' Tho' I should die, I know
 That all about the thorn will blow
 In tufts of rosy-tinted snow :

' And men, thro' novel spheres of thought
 Still moving after truth long sought,
 Will learn new things when I am not.'

' Yet,' said the secret voice, ' some time,
 Sooner or later, will gray prime
 Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

' Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
 Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
 Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,
The fuzzy prickle fire the dell;
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent ;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

'Waste this not well, to bide some time
In watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power.'

'The highest-mounted mind! how soon
Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Just breaking over land and main.'

'O, make that morn, from his cold room
And crystal silence creeping down,
Floral with full daylight glebe and town.'

'Fore-run thy peers, thy time, and be
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In miles of knowledge, stream'd not yet.'

'Thou dost not gain'd a real height,
Nur art thou nearer to the light,
Because the world is infinite.

'Twere better not to breathe or speak,
Thou say the strength remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover, but to seem to find
Ade what thou hast not, that thou hast not,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,
'He dared not tarry,' men will say,
Doing dishonour to my day.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,
'To breathe and loathe, to live and die
Than once from death of pain to rise.'

'Sick art thou—a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward's still.

'Do men love thee? Art thou so beautiful
To men, that how thy name may sweat
Will vex thee lying underground?

'The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust ;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,
'From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride !

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the day,
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I paus'd and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Pean clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strike a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the goal of life—

'Some hidden privilege to prove,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of being true—

As far as might be, to carve out
 Free cause for every human doubt,
 That life whole might might only allow—

‘To search thro’ all I felt or saw,
 The springs of life, the depths of awe,
 And reach the law within the law :

‘At once, not minding like a weed,
 Had, having sown some generous seed,
 I found of another thought and deed.

‘To pass, when late her light with-
 draws,
 Not sold of righteous self-applause,
 Nor in a merely selfish cause—

‘In some good cause, not his own,
 To perish, wept for, honour’d, known,
 And like a warrior overthrown ;

‘While eyes are dim with glorious
 tears,
 When, soil’d with noble dust, he hears
 His country’s war-song thrill his ears :

‘Than dying of a mortal stroke,
 What time the foeman’s line is broke,
 And all the war is roll’d in smoke.’

‘Yet, I and the vessel, thy dream was
 good,
 While thou abodest in the bud.
 It was the stirring of the blood.

‘If Nature put not forth her power
 At the opening of the flower,
 Why is it that could live an hour ?

‘Then comes the check, the change, the
 fall,
 Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.
 There is one remedy for all.

‘Yet hadst thou, thro’ enduring pain,
 Link’d month to month with such a chain
 Of knitted purport, all were vain.

‘Thou hadst not between death and birth
 Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
 So were thy labour little-worth.

‘That men with knowledge merely play’d,
 I told thee—hardly nigher made,
 Tho’ scaling slow from grade to grade ;

‘Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
 Named man, may hope some truth to find,
 That bears relation to the mind.

‘For every worm beneath the moon
 Draws different threads, and late and soon
 Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

‘Cry, faint not : either Truth is born
 Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
 Or in the gateways of the morn.

‘Cry, faint not, climb : the summits slope
 Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
 Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

‘Sometimes a little corner shines,
 As over rainy mist inclines
 A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

‘I will go forward, sayest thou,
 I shall not fail to find her now.
 Look up, the fold is on her brow.

‘If straight thy track, or if oblique,
 Thou know’st not. Shadows thou dost
 strike,
 Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

‘And owning but a little more
 Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
 Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and brawl!
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, un-sold, vain,' said I,
'Will this make everything all right
To flatter me that I may die?'

'I know that but to aggressors
Belongs a robe of sceptres and drags,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have sworn,
A living calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

'Was, roaming land against the stream,
Some distant gates of Eden gleam,
And I did not dream it was a dream ;

'But heard, by secret transport led,
Elys in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,
Elys and forbore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He bowed not reviling foes,
Nor sold his heart to ill omens,
Elys' roused and scorn'd, and bruised with
ambitions :

'But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face.'

'He called, among wild betwixt :
'Not that the grunts of hope were all,
The elements were kinder mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to make
One riddle, and to find the key,
I had a hundred others new :

'Or that this anguish fleeing hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be God's admission to perfection :

'For I go, weak from suffering here ;
Naked I go, and void of cheer :
What is it that I may not fear?'

'Consider well,' the voice replied,
'His face, that two hours since hath died ;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride :

'Will he obey when one commands?
Or answer should one press his hands?
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast :
There is no other thing exposed
But love, disquiet, merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek :
Thou' one should smite him on the cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes a lily-moor to her name—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some good to learn, some bad to know,
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave :

'High up the vapours fold and swim :
About him broods the twilight dim :
The yoke he knew forgot to him.'

'Hush! to dark, vague voices' I said,
 'These things are wrapt in doubt and
 dread,
 How canst thou show the dead are dead.'

'Thou art dead: open thy great eyes!
 A deeper light my heart divine,
 How I not Death? the outward sign.'

'I found him when my eyes were closed:
 A shadow on the graves I knew,
 And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept:
 In her still place the morning wept:
 Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'Thy doubtless words transcend the world!
 "Omega! thou art Lord," they said,
 "We find no motion in the dead!"

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
 Should that plain fact, as taught by these,
 Not make him sure that he shall cease?

'Who brings that other influence,
 That heat of inward evidence,
 By which he doubts again—'—

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
 That read his spirit blindly wise,
 Not simple as a thing that dies.

'How can his quivering wings to fly:
 His hand how makes a mystery:
 He knows the name Eternity.

'That eyes of Father or his child
 In Nature can be wholly blind:
 He cannot count on every wind.

'He cannot see his Heavenly Friend,
 And they that seek him in apparel
 A lance working to his end.

'Thy end had the beginning vex
 His end: many things perplex,
 With motions, checks, and counter-
 checks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood
 At such strange war with something good,
 He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
 Vast images in glimmering dawn,
 Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

'Ah! sure within him and without,
 Could his dark wisdom find it out,
 There must be answer to his doubt,

'But thou canst answer not again,
 With thine own weapon art thou slain,
 Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.
 In the same circle we revolve.
 Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,
 Falls back, the voice with which I fenced
 A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd
 In his free field, and pastime made,
 A merry boy in sun and shade?

'A merry boy they called him then,
 He sat upon the knees of men
 In days that never come again.

'Before the little ducts began
 To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
 Their course, till thou wert also man:

'Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
 Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
 Whose troubles number with his days:

'A life of nestings, nesting worth,
From that first nothing on his birth
To that last nesting under earth?'

'These words,' I said, 'are like the rose;
No certain closeness, but at best
A vague suggestion of the hoard:

'But if I gaze, then might it be
The things which they would attend —
That to begin longes to end;

'Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould?

'I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found
Which only to one engine bound
Holds off, but cycles always round.

'A cold biologist would
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

'As here we find in trances, men
Faint the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

'So might we, if our state were such
As one below, remember truth,
For those two lines might come and go.

'But, if I moved from outer place,
Some beyond of a fallen race
Able might him of my diagram;

'Some eager creature of daylight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of night;

'O, if that lower level I knew —
Thy' all experience past became
Circulate in mind and frame —

'I might forget my wooden lot;
For is not that lost year forgot?
The haunts of memory of his lot.

'And men, whose reason long was sound,
From wells of madness unconfound,
Off lose whole years of darker mind.

'Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory:

'For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, should she climb
Beyond her own material prime?

'Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams —

'Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.'

Thy still voice laugh'd. 'I talk,' said he,
'Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee —
Thy pain is a reality.'

'But thou,' said I, 'hast miss'd thy mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

'Why art thou so forth, if I should see
Thy radiance, that which might come
With this old world no longer free?

'Whatever e'er thy sorrow is,
No life that breathes with human life
Has ever truly long'd for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant ;
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning morn.

Like *the wind's* *gentle* *blowing* *and*,
When meres begin to uncoageal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :
Thinking the *best* *flowers* *of* *the* *year*;
And *measur'd* *like* *a* *wisdom* *pearl*.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
Whom measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Waving the rose of womanhood.

And *the* *third* *of* *the* *three*;
The *lute* *of* *the* *world* *walk'd* *demure*,
Being *with* *downward* *sydlin's* *pure*.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :
I *was* *but* *answer* *came* *there* *none* :
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A *second* *year* *of* *an* *anti* *ear*,
A *little* *silver* *clear*,
A *second* *year* *of* *an* *anti* *ear*.

As from some blissful neighbourhood,
A notice faintly understood,
'I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,
A *hint* *of* *whisper* *breathing* *low*,
'I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :
'What is it thou knowest, sweet voice ?'
I cried.

'A hidden hope,' the voice replied :
So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature's living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter showers :
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong.

Unawares seem'd all things wrought,
I marvel'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, 'Rejoice! rejoice!'

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I met the wealthy miller yet,
 His double chin, his poorly eye,
 And who that knew him could forget
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes?
 The slow wise smile that, round about
 His dusty forehead drily curl'd,
 Seem'd half-within and half-without,
 And full of dealings with the world?

In yonder chair I see him sit,
 Three fingers round the old silver cup—
 I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
 At his own jest—gray eyes lit up
 With summer lightnings of a soul
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,
 So healthy, sound, and clear and whole.
 His memory never can make me dull

Yet fill my glass: give me one kiss:
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.
 There's somewhat in this world amiss
 Shall be unriddled by and by.
 There's somewhat flows true in life,
 But more is taken quite away.
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy truth?
 That should breathe a thought of pain.
 Would God renew me from my birth
 I'd almost live my life again.
 So sweet it would were that to be,
 And once again to woo thee mine—
 It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless lay
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,
 Whose this old mansion mounted high
 Look'd down upon the village spire:

Or even here, where I and you
 Have lived and loved alone so long,
 Each morning sheep was broken three
 By some still idyl's matin song.

And oft I heard the January dave
 In firry woodlands making moan;
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
 I had no notion of my own.
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd
 Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—
 Still hither thither idly sway'd
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear
 The milldam rushing down with noise,
 And see the minnows everywhere
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung
 Below the range of stepping-stones,
 Or those three chestnuts near, that hung
 In masses thick with milky cones.

But Alice, what an hour was that,
 When after roving in the woods
 'Twas April then), I came and sat
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds
 Were glistening to the breezy blue:
 And on the slope, an absent mood,
 I sat me down, nor thought of you,
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere met
 An echo from a measured strain,
 Best time to resting on my head
 From some odd corner of the brain.
 It haunted me, the morning long,
 With woe'sy harmonies to the hymns,
 The phantom of a silent song,
 That went and came a thousand times.

Then hapt it first, in the moon
 I watch'd the little circles die;
 They past into the level flood,
 And there a vision caught my eye;

The room of a roomy farm,
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
 And then a southern waver warn
 Within the dark and dimpled beak.

For you remember, you had set,
 That morning, on the casement-edge
 A long green box of mignonette,
 And you were leaning from the ledge:
 And when I raised my eyes, above
 They met with two so full and bright
 As in eyes! I swear to you, my love,
 That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
 That I should die an early death:
 My love possess'd the atmosphere,
 And fill'd the breast with mine breath.
 My mother's thought, What ails the boy?
 For I was alter'd, and began
 To move about the house with joy,
 And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
 Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
 The sleepy pool above the dam,
 The pool beneath it never still,
 The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
 The dark round of the dripping wheel,
 The wavy air about the door
 Made misty with the floating meal.

All oft in ramblings on the wold,
 When April night began to blow,
 And April's faint glimmer'd cold,
 I saw the village lights below;
 Hence your taper far away,
 And full at heart of trembling hope,
 From off the wold I came, and lay
 Upon the freshly shower'd slope.

The lamp that glow'd beneath the mill;
 And 'O! that lamp,' I thought, 'she sits!
 How clear a hall-way from the hill
 Would it to the flying moon be fit.

'O that I were beside her now!
 O will she answer if I call?
 O would she give me vow for vow,
 Sweet Alice, if I told her all?'

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin;
 And, in the pauses of the wind,
 Sometimes I heard you sing within;
 Sometimes your shadow cross'd the
 blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,
 And the long shadow of the chair
 Flitted across into the night,
 And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
 The lanes, you know, were white with
 may,
 Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek
 Flush'd like the coming of the day;
 And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,
 You would, and would not, little one!
 Although I pleaded tenderly,
 And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
 To yield consent to my desire:
 She wish'd me happy, but she thought
 I might have look'd a little higher;
 And I was young—too young to wed:
 'Yet must I love her for your sake;
 Go fetch your Alice here,' she said:
 Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:
 But, Alice, you were ill at ease;
 This dress and that by turns you tried,
 Too fearful that you should not
 please.

I loved you better for your fears,
 I knew you could not look but well;
 And dew, that would have fall'n in
 tears,
 I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings—

 The doubt my mother would not see;
She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me;
And turning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and, with a silent grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song

 I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive pair, and you were gay
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,

 And she is grown so dote, so sweet,
That I would be the towel
That trembles in her ear:
For laid in ringles day and night,
I touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle

 About her dainty dainty waist,
And her hand would I be against her
In sorrow and in pain:
And I should know if it be her right,
Of things she would not wish to say.

And I would be the cushion

 And lay her weary, full and true,
Upon her dainty bosom,
With her head close to her side,
And I should be as light, as light,
Lovers should be, and as it right.

A trifle, sweet, I which true love spells—

 True love interprets—right alone.
His light upon the letter dwells,
For all the sport is his own.
So, if I waste words now, in truth
You must blame *LAVY*: His early years
Had force to make two rhythms, in youth,
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,

 Like mine own life to nothing art,
Whose Past and Present, seem'd in one,
Do make a godhead for the heart:
So sing that other song I made,
Half-anger'd with my happy lot.
The day, when in the chamber white
I found the blue *FOURTEEN-CENT*.

I love that bathos in the song

 Can be just, and you forget it
More, and more, and more,
Many a woman, the young ladies,
I love the gift is Love the debt.
 FOURTEEN-CENT
Lays is hurt with jar and fret,
I would not wish to say so great
Eyes with idle tears are yet,
Idle habit links us yet,
What is love? for we forget:
 Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True
 wife,

 From my true heart thine arms entwine
My other dearer life in life,

 Look thro' my very soul with thine!
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
 May those kind eyes for ever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,

FOURTEEN-CENT: but I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part
 Of sorrow: for when time was young,

The still affection of the heart
 Became an *UNKNOWN* moulding type.

That into stillness past again,
 And left a *SECRET* unknown future;
Although the loss that brought us into,
 That loss but made us *LOVE* the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss

 The *SECRET* *SECRET* seem'd but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss.
 FOURTEEN-CENT, I have found in three

Be that God bless thee, dear—who
wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

And let us wander forth,
To yon old mill across the wolds ;
I shall, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds.
And here you overtake the sun's glass,
Touching the sullen pool below.
On the chalk-hill the bearded gale
Leaves rustle blowing. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O Love, Love, Love! O withering
night!
O man, that from thy noonday height
Shudderest when I strain my sight,
Tossing thro' all thy heat and light,
Lo, falling from my constant mind,
For, perished and wither'd, deaf and
blind,
I whirl like leaves in stormy wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours
Below the city's eastern towers.
I thought for the brook's, the daisy's,
I roll among the tender flowers:
I crush'd them on my breast, my mouth ;
I look'd athwart the burning drouth
Of the long door to the south.
Last night, when some one spoke his name,
I saw my will that went and came
A thousand little shifts of time
Now shav'd in my narrow frame.
O Love, O man? canst thou
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'
My lips, my heart, my mind, my

Before he mounts the hill, I know
He comes quickly: from below
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow
Before him, striking on my brow.
In my dry brain my spirit soon,
Down-deepening from swoon to swoon,
Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,
And from beyond the noon a fire
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher
The skies stoop down in their desire ;
And, isled in sudden seas of light,
My heart, pierc'd thro' with fierce
delight,
Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,
All naked in a sultry sky,
Droops, blinded with his shining eye :
I will possess him or will die.
I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die looking on his face,
Die, dying, clasped in his embrace.

ÆNONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the
glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n
ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.

Behind the valley topmost thicket—
Stands up and takes the morning : but in
front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Traces and Hion's-cashum'd woods,
The crown of Tintre.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris' smelt her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round
her neck

Flashed her hair as seem'd to float in rose.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with
vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the
upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-bosom'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

For now the noonday quiet holds the hill
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Keeps like a shadow, and the cicada sleeps.
The purple flowers droop — the golden bee
Is hily-smell'd : I alone awake.

My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are
dim,

And I am all aware of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-bosom'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O
Caves

That lower the cold snow'd snake ! O
mountain brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-stone,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, to yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music dewy-benighted.
I should that gather'd thence, for it may be

That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may with the homestead deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-bosom'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :
Beautiful Paris, ere I bosom'd Paris.

Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
white-hooved,

Came up from reedy Sirois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I smelt the torrent call'd me from the
cleft :

Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
dropt eyes

I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
I found the dawn he moved : a leopard
skin

Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair

Flashed about his bosom'd Ida, God's :
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-
bow brightens

With the wind blew the foam, and all
my heart

Went forth to embrace him, smiling ere
he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-
white gain

That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
speech

Came down upon my heart.

'My own Ænone,
Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
ingrav'n

For the moon fair would seem to award
 it thine,
 As lovelier than whatever Oront had
 The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
 Of movement, and the charm of married
 brows."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
 And added "This was cast upon the board,
 When all the full-faced presence of the
 Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where
 Rose feud, with question unto whom
 'twere due :

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
 Delivering, that to me, by common voice,
 Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
 Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
 This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
 cave

Behind you whispering tuft of oldest pine,
 Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-
 heard

Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of
 Gods."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 It was the deep midnoon: one silvery
 moon

Had lost his way between the piney sides
 Of this long glen. Then to the bower
 they came.

Noted they came to that smooth-winded
 bower.

And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
 Wild, anemone, and asphodel,
 Lilies and lilies: and a wind arose.

And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
 The ivy and that, in many a wild fastoon
 Ran out, unfolding the gnarled boughs
 With larch and berry and flower thro'
 the air.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and
 leant

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to
 whom

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that
 grows
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the
 Gods

Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state, "from
 many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
 with corn,

Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.
 Honour," she said, "and homage, tax
 and toll,

From many an inland town and haven
 large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
 citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Still she spake on and still she spake of
 power,

"Which in all action is the end of all;
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
 And throne'd of wisdom—from all neigh-
 bour crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon
 from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee
 king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men,
 in power,

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd

Rest in a happy place and quiet seat—
Above the flounder, with unyielding bliss
Is knowledge of their own supremacy.”

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
O’er at a nod—alright, so much the thought
Of power

Flute’d his spirit; but Pallas where she
stood

Stood apart, her clear and bared limbs
Overhanging with the bronzen-headed spear

Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her fall and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry
cheek

Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-
control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign
power.

Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncall’d for) but to live by
law,

Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
When wisdom in the seats of conse-
quence.”

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Against all!—I was thine not with gifts.
Squel of greediness could not alter me
To fever. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me truest.

Yet, indeed,
If passion or civility dimm’d

Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbias’d by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and obey to
thee,

So that my veins would bleed to thy blood,

Shall strike within thy palms, like a
God’s

To push thee forward thro’ a life of sinews,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sweeten’d with action and the fall-grown
will,

Circled thro’ all experiences, pure law,
Commensure perfect fashion.”

“How she ceas’d,

And Paris ponder’d, and I cried, “O
Paris,

Give it to Pallas!” but he heard me not.
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

“O mother Ida, many-fountain’d Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian Aphroditè beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian
wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her
deep hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And sloothless: from the violet her light
feet

Shone rosy-white, and o’er her round
feet

Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Fluted the glowing and light, as dis-
moved.

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes.
The herald of her triumph, striding with
Hilf-willingness in his arm. “I promise
thee

“The Direct and most loving wife in
Greece,”

She spoke and laugh’d: I shut my light
for fear:

But when I look’d, Paris had raised his
arm,

And I beheld great Heru’s angry eyes,

As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower;
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 And I shall be alone until I die.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die:

Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
 My love hath told me so a thousand times.
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
 Cackled fawning in the wood. Most

loving is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my
 arms
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
 prest
 close, close to thine in that quick-falling
 dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.

They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
 My dark tall pines, that plumed the
 craggy ledge
 High over the blue gorge, and all between
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
 Foster’d the callow eaglet—from beneath
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark
 morn

The panther’s roar came muffled, while I
 sat
 Low in the valley. Never, never more
 shall I see Ænone see the morning mist
 Sweep thro’ them; never see them over-
 laid

With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
 Between the loud stream and the trem-
 bling stars.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin’d folds,

Among the fragments tumbled from the
 lens,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
 The Abominable, that uninvited came
 Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
 And bred this change; that I might speak
 my mind,

And tell her to her face how much I hate
 Her presence, hated both of Gods and
 men.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.

I hath he not sworn his love a thousand
 times,
 In this green valley, under this green hill,
 Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this
 stone?

Seal’d it with kisses? water’d it with tears?
 O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
 O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my
 face?

O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
 weight?
 O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
 cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth,
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
 I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
 And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
 Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.

I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
 Do shape themselves within me, more and
 more,

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
 Dead sounds at night come from the
 inmost hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
 Conjectures of the features of her child

Ere it is born : her child !—a shudder
comes

Across me : never child be born'd of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes !

'O mother, hear me yet before I die,
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to
me

Walking the cold and starless road of
Death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and
go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come
forth

Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she
says

A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.

What this may be I know not, but I
know

That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire.'

THE SISTERS.

We were two daughters of one race :

She was the fairest in the face :

The wind is blowing in turret and tree

They were together, and she fell ;

Therefore revenge be mine, me well.

O the Earl was fair to see !

She died : she went to burning flame :

She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.

The wind is howling in turret and
tree.

Whole weeks and months, and early and
late,

To win his love I lay in wait :

O the Earl was fair to see !

made a feast ; I bade him come ;

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he laid his head.

O the Earl was fair to see !

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :

His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,

But I loved his beauty passing well.

O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :

I made my dagger sharp and bright.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

As half-asleep his breath he drew,

Three times I stab'd him thro' and thro'.

O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,

He look'd so grand when he was dead.

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.

I wrapt his body in the sheet,

And laid him at his mother's feet.

O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,

(For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts.

A spacious garden full of flowering
words,

A glorious Devil, true in heart and
brain,

That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen

In all varieties of mould and mind)

And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if

Good,

Good only for its beauty, seeing not
 That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are
 three sisters
 That best upon each other, friends to man,
 Living together under the same roof,
 And never can be sunder'd without tears.
 And he that but Love out, in turn shall be
 Shut out from Love, and on her threshold
 lie
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
 Was common clay ta'en from the common
 earth,
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with the
 tears
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I built my soul a lovely pleasure-
 house,
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
 I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,
 Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burn-
 ish'd stone,
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
 From level meadows (bases of deep grass
 Suddenly sealed the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or
 shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and
 round,' I said,
 'Ligh thou apart, a quiet ring,
 Still as while Saturn whirls his steadfast
 axle
 Slow on his luminous ring.'

To which my soul made answer readily :
 'Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 in this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So royal-rich and wide.'

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Four courts I made, East, West and
 South and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there
 ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty
 woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the
 sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one
 swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd
 From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, 'And who shall gaze
 upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the
 sun,
 And that sweet incense rise?'

For that sweet incense rose and never
fail'd,

And, while day sank or mounted
higher,

The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
and traced,

Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

* * * *
* * * *

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did
pass,
Well-pleas'd, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
stood,

All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and
blue,

Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted
hunter blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of
sand,

And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
waves.

You seem'd to hear them climb and fall

And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
caves,
Beneath the wintry wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By bends upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind

Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones
and slags,

Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the
scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight
pour'd

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,

Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
there
Not less than ruth design'd.

* * * *
* * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonix
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian
king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blue unclasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

* * * *

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Mov'd of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and
mild ;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd
his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest ;
A million wrinkles carved his skin ;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his
breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every
land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and
stings ;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or
bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man
declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those great
bells

Began to chime. She took her throne :
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' coloured
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion
were

Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd
fair
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, eme-
rald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,
drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive.

Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : ' All these are
mine,

And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me.' She--when young night
divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious tools--
Lit light in wreaths and anadeins,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems.

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hand
and cried,

' I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so myriad rich, and wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

' O all things fair to suit my various
eyes !

O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

' O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves
of swine
That range on yonder plain.

' In filthy sloughs they roll a purient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral abstract would she
prate
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate,
And at the last she said :

' I take possession of man's mind and
deed.

I care not what the sects may brawl,
I sit as God holding my throne of creed,
But contemplating all.'

* * * * *

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd: so three
years
She prosper'd: on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his
ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born
Scorn of herself; again, from out that
mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

'What! is not this my place of strength,'
she said,
'My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones
were laid
Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears
of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she
came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of
sand,
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from
the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
curl'd.
'No voice,' she shriek'd in that lone
hall,
'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this
world:
One deep, deep silence all!'

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering sod,
Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
 And ever worse with growing time,
 And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
 And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt
 round

With blackness as a solid wall,
 Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
 Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking
 slow,
 In doubt and great perplexity,
 A little before moon-rise hears the low
 Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a
 sound

Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
 cry

Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, ' I
 have found
 A new land, but I die.'

She howl'd aloud, ' I am on fire within.
 There comes no murmur of reply.
 What is it that will take away my sin,
 And save me lest I die ?'

So when four years were wholly finished,
 She threw her royal robes away.
 ' Make me a cottage in the vale,' she
 said,
 ' Where I may mourn and pray.

' Yet pull not down my palace towers,
 that are
 So lightly, beautifully built :
 Perchance I may return with others there
 When I have purged my guilt.'

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE,

Of me you shall not win renown :
 You thought to break a country heart
 For pastime, ere you went to town.
 At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
 I saw the snare, and I retired :
 The daughter of a hundred Earls,
 You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

I know you proud to bear your name,
 Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
 Too proud to care from whence I came.
 Nor would I break for your sweet sake
 A heart that doats on truer charms.
 A simple maiden in her flower
 Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

Some meeker pupil you must find,
 For were you queen of all that is,
 I could not stoop to such a mind.
 You sought to prove how I could love,
 And my disdain is my reply.
 The lion on your old stone gates
 Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

You put strange memories in my head,
 Not thence your branching lines have
 blown
 Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
 Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies :
 A great enchantress you may be ;
 But there was that across his throat
 Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

When thus he met his mother's view,
 She had the passions of her kind,
 She spake some certain truths of you.

Indeed I heard one bitter word
 That scarce is fit for you to hear ;
 Her manners had not that repose
 Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
 There stands a spectre in your hall :
 The guilt of blood is at your door :
 You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
 You held your course without remorse,
 To make him trust his modest worth,
 And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,
 And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
 From yon blue heavens above us bent
 The gardener Adam and his wife
 Smile at the claims of long descent.
 Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
 'Tis only noble to be good.

Kind hearts are more than coronets,
 And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
 You pine among your halls and towers :
 The languid light of your proud eyes
 Is wearied of the rolling hours.
 In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
 But sickening of a vague disease,
 You know so ill to deal with time,
 You needs must play such pranks as
 these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
 If Time be heavy on your hands,
 Are there no beggars at your gate,
 Nor any poor about your lands?
 Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,
 Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
 Pray Heaven for a human heart,
 And let the foolish yeoman go

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;
 Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day ;
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;
 There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :
 But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
 So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
 If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :
 But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
 But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?
 He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,—
 But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
 And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light,
 They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be :
 They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me ?
 There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
 And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen ;
 For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers :
 And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
 And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass ;
 There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
 And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
 And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year :
 To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
 It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
 Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and left behind
 The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind ;
 And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
 The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day ;
 Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May ;
 And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,
 Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
 I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
 I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
 I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
 And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
 And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the wave
 But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
 In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
 Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
 When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
 You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;
 When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
 On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
 And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
 I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
 With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;
 You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ;
 Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
 You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place ;
 Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face
 Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,
 And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for evermore,
 And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door ;
 Don't let Elsie come to see me till my grave be growing green :
 She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :
 Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :
 But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-bush that I set
 About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother: call me before the day is born.
 All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;
 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
 So, if you're wailing, call me, call me early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;
 And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !
 To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
 And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
 And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet He will be done !
 But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;
 And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !
 O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :
 He sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
 And hush on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
 It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;
 The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
 And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;
 I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;
 With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,
 And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
 And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said ;
 For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
 And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, 'It's not for them: it's mine.'
 And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
 And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
 Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
 The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
 And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
 But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;
 There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
 If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;
 But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;
 He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
 And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
 Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
 The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—
 For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—
 And what is life, that we should moan? why make we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
 And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—
 To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—
 And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed toward
the land,

'This mounting wave will roll us shore-
ward soon.'

In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did
swarm,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon ;

And like a downward smoke, the slender
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall
did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a down-
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did
go ;

And some thro' wavering lights and sha-
dows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land : far off, three moun-
tain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow
down

Border'd with palm, and many a winding
vale

And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
A land where all things always seem'd
the same !

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the
wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and
rave

On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave ;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the
shore ;

And sweet it was to dream of Father-
land,

Of child, and wife, and slave ; but ever-
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren
foam.

Then some one said, ' We will return no
more ; '

And all at once they sang, ' Our island
home

Is far beyond the wave ; we will no
longer roam.'

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the
grass.

Or night-dews on still waters between
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness ?

All things have rest : why should we toil
alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm ;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm !'

Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud

With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no
care,

Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-
mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no
toil,

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.

Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we
have

To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave

In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or
dreamful ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-
ward stream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber
light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on
the height ;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech :
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray :
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melan-
choly ;

To muse and brood and live again in
memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an
urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath
suffer'd change ;

For surely now our household hearths are
cold :

Our sons inherit us : our looks are
strange :

And we should come like ghosts to
trouble joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold
Have ~~out~~ our substance, and the minstrel
sings

Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
things.

Is there confusion in the little isle ?

Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile :

'Tis hard to settle order once again.

There *is* confusion worse than death,

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labour unto aged breath,

Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars

And eyes grown dim with gazing on the
pilot-stars.

VII.

But, ~~propt~~ on beds of amaranth and
moly,

How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
blowing lowly)

With half-dropt eyelid still,

Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly

His waters from the purple hill—

To hear the dewy echoes calling

From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
vine—

To watch the emerald-colour'd water
falling

Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine !

Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
brine,

Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren
peak :

The Lotos blows by every winding creek :

All day the wind breathes low with
mellower tone :

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone

Round and round the spacy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of
motion we,

Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was soothing free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an
equal mind,

In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie
reclined

On the hills like Gods together, careless
of mankind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the
bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with
the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking over
wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,
roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred
in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an
ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
words are strong ;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that
cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with
enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and
wine and oil ;
Till they perish and they suffer—some,
'tis whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian
valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of
asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind
and wave and oar ;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their
shade,
'The Legend of Good Women,' long ago

Sung by the morning star of song, who
made
His music heard below ;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose
sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
Held me above the subject, as strong
gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'
my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In
every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient
song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning
stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and
wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging
hoofs :
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-
aries ;
And forms that pass'd at windows and on
roofs
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues
of fire ;

White surf winds-scatter'd over sails and
masts,

And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,

And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-
same way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,

Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove
to speak,

As when a great thought strikes along
the brain,

And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,

That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing
thought

Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and
did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,
and brought

Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in
coolest dew

The maiden-splendour of the morning star
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with
clearest green,

New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the
twilight plain,

Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;

Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine
turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root thro' lush green grasses

burn'd

The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,
I knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks
drench'd in dew,

Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Fou'd back into my empty soul and

frame

The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
 Thill'd thro' mine ears in that un-
 blissful clime,
 'Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine
 own,
 Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,
 Still'er than chisell'd marble, standing
 there ;
 A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with
 surprise
 Fosc my swift speech : she turning on
 my face
 The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
 Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty : ask thou not my
 name :
 No one can be more wise than destiny.
 Many drew swords and died. Where'er
 I came
 I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field
 Myself for such a face had boldly died,'
 I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
 To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks
 averse, [draws ;
 To her full height her stately stature
 'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with
 a curse :
 This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
 Which yet to name my spirit loathes
 and fears :
 My father held his hand upon his face ;
 I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak : my voice was thick
 with sighs
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
 The stern black-bearded kings with
 wolfish eyes,
 Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay
 afloat ;
 The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and
 the shore ;
 The bright death quiver'd at the victim's
 throat ;
 Touch'd ; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward
 brow :
 'I would the white cold heavy-plunging
 foam,
 Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep
 below,
 Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence
 drear,
 As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :
 Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come
 here,
 That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
 One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd ;
 A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold
 black eyes,
 Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile,
 began :
 'I govern'd men by change, and so I
 sway'd
 All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen
 a man.
 Once, like the moon, I made

'The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and
flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood
That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not
bend

One will; nor tame and tutor with
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Caesar. Prythee,
friend,

Where is Mark Antony?

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode
sublime

On Fortune's neck: we sat as God by
God:

The Nilus would have risen before his
time

And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and
lit

Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O
my life

In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from
war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,

My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,
Contented there to die!

'And there he died: and when I heard
my name

Sigh'd forth with life I would not
brook my fear

Of the other: with a worm I talk'd his
fame.

What else was left? look here!'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and hal-

The polish'd argent of her breast to sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a
laugh,

Showing the aspick's bite.)

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier—
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,

A name for ever!—lying robed and
crown'd,

Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range

Struck by all passion, did fall down
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
delight;

Because with sudden motion from the
ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd
with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest
darts;

As once they drew into two burning
rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts

Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I
heard

A noise of ~~some~~ one coming thro' the
lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested bird
That claps his wings at dawn.

The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
 From craggy hollows pouring, late and
 soon,
 Sound all night long, in falling thro' the
 dell,
 Far-heard beneath the moon.

The balmy moon of blessed Israel
 Floods all the deep-blue gloom with
 beams divine :
 All night the splinter'd crags that wall
 the dell
 With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine
 laves
 The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the
 door
 Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
 Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and
 tied
 To where he stands,—so stood I, when
 that flow
 Of music left the lips of her that died
 To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
 A maiden pure ; as when she went
 along
 From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome
 light,
 With tumbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : 'Heaven heads
 the cost of crimes
 With that wild oath.' She render'd
 answer high :
 'Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand
 times
 I would be born and die.

'Single I grew, like some green plant,
 whose root
 Creeps to the garden water-pipes
 beneath,
 Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to
 fruit
 Changed, I was ripe for death.

'My God, my land, my father—these did
 move
 Me from my bliss of life, that Nature
 gave,
 Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of
 love
 Down to a silent grave.

'And I went mourning, "No fair Hebrew
 boy
 Shall smile away my maiden blame
 among
 The Hebrew mothers"—emptied of all
 joy,
 Leaving the dance and song,

'Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
 Leaving the promise of my bridal
 bower,
 The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
 Beneath the battled tower.

'The light white cloud swam over us.
 Anon
 We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
 We saw the large white stars rise one by
 one,
 Or, from the darken'd glen,

'Saw God divide the night with flying
 flame,
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.
 I heard Him, for He spake, and grief
 became
 A solemn scorn of ills.

'When the next moon was roll'd into the
sky,

Strength came to me that equal'd my
desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire !

'It comforts me in this one thought to
dwell,

That I subdued me to my father's will ;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

'Moreover it is written that my name
How'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
Aroer

On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

she lock'd her lips : she left me where I
stood :

'Glory to God,' she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the
wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her card I stood pensively.

As one that from a casement looks his
head.

When midnight bells cease ringing sud-
denly,
And the old year is dead.

'Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of woe,
Murmur'd beside me : ' Turn and look
on me :

I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
If what I was I be.

'Would I had been some maiden countess
and poor !

O me, that I should ever see the light ;
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night.'

She passed in tears, fallen from hope and
trust :

To whom the Egyptian : ' O, you
tamely died !

You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,
and thrust
The dagger thro' her side.'

With that sharp sound the white dawn's
creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the
mystery

Of folded sleep. The captain of my
dreams

Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark.

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last
trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of
Arc,

A light of ancient France ;

Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish
Death,

Who kneeling, with one arm about her
king,

Drew forth the poison with her balmy
breath,

Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden

ore

That glimpses, moving up, than I from
sleep

To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what
dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
strike

Into that wondrous track of dreams again !
But no two dreams are like.

Al when a soul laments, which hath been
 blest,
 Desiring what is mingled with past
 years,
 In yearnings that can never be express'd
 By sighs or groans or tears :

Because all words, tho' call'd with
 choicest art,
 Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
 Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
 Fades, faded by its heat.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :
 While all the neighbours shoot thee
 round,
 I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
 Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
 Are thine ; the range of lawn and park :
 The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,
 All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
 Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
 With that gold dagger of thy bill
 To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,
 Cold February loved, is dry :
 Plenty corrupts the melody
 Tho' while thee anxious once, when
 young :

And as the sultry garden-squares,
 Now thy flute-notes are changed to
 coarse,
 I hear thee not at all, or hoarsely
 As when a lawler hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing
 While yon sun prospers in the blue,
 Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,
 Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
 And the winter winds are wearily
 sighing :
 Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
 And tread softly and speak low,
 For the old year lies a-dying.
 Old year, you must not die ;
 You came to us so readily,
 You lived with us so steadily,
 Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :
 He will not see the dawn of day.
 He hath no other life above.
 He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
 And the New-year will take 'em away.
 Old year, you must not go ;
 So long as you have been with us,
 Such joy as you have seen with us,
 Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;
 A jollier year we shall not see.
 But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
 And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
 He was a friend to me.
 Old year, you shall not die ;
 We did so laugh and cry with you,
 I've half a mind to die with you,
 Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
 But all his merry quips are o'er.
 To see him die, across the waste
 His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
 But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my
friend,
And the New-year is like and bold,
my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How loud he breathes ! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro ;
The cricket chirps : the light burns
low :
Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands, before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :
What is it we can do for you ?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack ! our friend is gone.
Tie up his eyes : tie up his chin :
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
Here's a new foot on the floor, my
friend,
And a new face at the door, my
friend,
A new face at the door.

70 3

The wind, that beats the mountain,
blows
More softly round the open world,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.
And me this knowledge better made,
Or else I had not dared to flow.
In these words toward you, and towards
Even with a verse your holy word.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are
nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost :
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us ; but, when love is
grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !
In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;
Once thro' mine own doors Death did
pass ;
One went, who never hath returned.

He will not smile—not speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is
seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star
Rose with you thro' a little arc
Of heaven, not having wander'd far,
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute face
I honour and his living worth :
A man more pure and bold and just
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you night,
Since that dear soul hath fallen asleep.
Great Nature is more wise than I :
I will not tell you not to weep.

And his' mine own eyes fill with awe,
Drawn from the seat thro' the brain.
I will not even preach to you,
'Weep, weeping dulls the mortal
pain.'

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
 She loveth her own anguish deep
 More than much pleasure. Let her will
 Be alone—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, 'God's ordinance
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;'
 For that is not a common chance
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
 In all our hearts, as mournful light
 That broods above the fallen sun,
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near
 Cast down her eyes, and in her throat
 Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,
 How *could* I soothe you anyway.
 Wipe *not* the brother of your youth?
 Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :
 Both ate my friends, and my true
 bread
 Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be
 That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would
 make
 Grief more. 'Twere better I should
be
 Although myself could almost take
 The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
 While the stars burn, the moons increase,
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
 Nothing comes to thee new or
 strange.
 Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

ON A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
 Imitates God, and turns her face
 To every land beneath the skies,
 Counts nothing that she meets with
 base,
 But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,
 Steps from her airy hill, and greens
 The swamp, where hums the dropping
 snipe,
 With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
 Saying, 'Beat quicker, for the time
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways
 Are pleasant, and the beech and lime
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,
 Going before to some far shrine,
 Teach that sick heart the stronger choic
 Till all thy life one way incline
 With one wide will that closes thine.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
 Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn,
 Come Hope and Memory, spouse and
 bride,
 From out the borders of the morn,
 With that fair child betwixt them born.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
 The blackness round the bombing sand,
 Thro' silence and the trembling stass
 Comes Faith from trusts no feet have
 trod,
 And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire : such as those
 That came at dead of night did grant
 Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose
 With sacrifice, while all the fleet
 Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

YOU ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
 Within this region I subsist,
 Whose spirits falter in the mist :
 And languish for the purple seas ?

It is the land that freemen till,
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,
 The land, where girt with friends or
 foes—
 A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
 A land of just and old renown,
 Where Freedom's homelike study
 down
 From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,
 But by degrees to fullness wrought,
 The strength of some decisive
 thought
 Hath time and space to work unobscured.

Should banded unions persecute
 Opinion, and induce a time
 When single thought is civil crime,
 And individual freedom stung ;

Tho' Power should make from land to
 land

The name of Britain trebly great—
 Tho' every channel of the State
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the [unfortunate] mind,
 Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
 And I will see before I die
 The palms and temples of the South.

Or old sat Freedom on the heights,
 The thunders breaking at her feet :
 Above her shook the starry lights :
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
 But fragments of her mighty voice
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then step she down thro' town and field
 To mingle with the human race,
 And part by part to men reveal
 The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic words,
 From her isle-altar gazing down,
 Who, God-like, groups the triple Circle
 And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth,
 The wisdom of a thousand years
 Is in them. — May perpetual youth
 Keep dry those light from tears :

That her fire from my breast and mine,
 Make bright our days and light our
 dreams.

Turning to scorn with lips divine
 The falsehood of extremes !

Love thee thy land, with love far-
brought

From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lime.

Believe not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day.
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the
years :
Cut Prejudice against the grain :
But gentle words are always gain :
Eschew the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise :
It grows to quention after-days :
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
Nor muzz'd by some modern term ;
Not slow to change, but
firm :
And in all cases firm the law :

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly,
binds—

Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.}

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school ;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A word to puff your idol-tires,
And heap their ashes on the head ;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in anarchy, as in your
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
Would serve his kind in deed and
word,
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that
broke
From either side, nor veil his eyes ;
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossoms of the dead ;
E'en well the thrifty months, nor wed
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
Her rags scarce held together ;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He utter'd rhyme and reason,
'Here, take the goose, and keep your warm
It is a stormy season.'

She caught the white goose by the leg,
A goose—'twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the gold,
And ran to tell her neighbours :
And bless'd herself, and curs'd herself,
And rested from her labours.

And feeding high, and living soft,
Grew plump and able-bodied ;
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder :
But ah ! the more the white goose laid
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :
She shifted in her elbow-chair,
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

'A quinsy choke thy curs'd note !'
Then wax'd her anger stronger,
'Go, take the goose, and wing her home ;
I will not bear it longer.'

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat ;
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And fill'd the house with clamour.

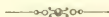
As head and heels upon the floor
They flounder'd all together,
There arriv'd a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd words of scorning ;
 'So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
 It is a stormy morning.'

The wild wind rang from park and plain,
 And round the attics rumbled,
 Till all the tables danced again,
 And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
 The blast was hard and harder.
 Her cap blew off, her gown blew up
 And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose
 Her household fled the danger,
 Quoth she, 'The Devil take the goose,
 And God forget the stranger !'



ENGLISH IDYLLS

AND OTHER POEMS.

THE EPIC.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-
 eve,—
 The game of forfeits done—the girls all
 kiss'd
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard
 Hall,
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-
 bowl,
 Then half-way ebb'd : and there we held
 a talk,
 How all the old honour had from Christ-
 mas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd
 games
 In some odd nooks like this ; till I, tired
 out
 With cutting eights that day upon the
 pond,
 Where, three times slipping from the
 outer edge,
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars

Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard
 The parson taking wide and wider
 sweeps,
 Now harping on the church-commis-
 sioners,
 Now hawking at Geology and schism ;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right thro' the world, 'at home was little
 left,
 And none abroad : there was no anchor,
 none,
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt
 his hand
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by
 him.'
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-
 bowl.'
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift
 that way
 At college : but another which you had,
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
 What came of that ?' 'You know,' said
 Frank, 'he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books'—

And then to me demanding why? 'Oh,
sir,

He thought that nothing new was said, or
else

Something so good 'twas nothing—that a
truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.

It pleased us well enough.' 'Nay, nay,'
said Hall,

'Why take the style of those heroic
times?

For nature brings not back the Masto-
don,

Nor we those times; and why should any
man

Remodel models? these twelve books of
mine

Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing
worth.

Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.'
'But I,'

Said Francis, 'pick'd the clew-needle from
this hearth

And have it: keep a thing, its use will
come.

I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'

He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a
horse

That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my
ears:

For I remember'd Everard's colloquium
When we were Freshmen: then at my
request

He brought it; and the poet little urged,
But with some prelude of discouragement,

Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and
aes,

Unspiced music, and to this result:

MOORE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the water-side;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonness about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound
was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir
Bedivere:

'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think
that we

Shall never more, at any future date,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly
deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.

I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be,
be.

I am so deeply smitten thro' the loins
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou remainest
loved how

In those old days, and neither sleep, nor
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful.

Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a
king :

And, wheresoever I am sung or told

In aftertime, this also shall be known :

But now delay not : take Excalibur,

And fling him far into the middle mere :

Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm

A little thing may harm a wounded man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,

Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept

And in the moon adwart the place of
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang

shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He
stepping down

by zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,

Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There threw he forth the brand
Excalibur,

And over him, drawing it, the winter
moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran
forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt :

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
spots,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long

That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,

In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd

Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

There in the many-knotted waterflags,

That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir
Bedivere :

'Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave?

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere :

'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :

'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd

Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.

Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the
thing

I bid thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the

mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,

How curiously and strangely chased, he
snote

His palms together, and he cried aloud,

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the
earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of
many men.

What good should follow this, if this were
done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to dis-
obey.

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king
demand

And act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what he
does.

What record, or what relic of my lord
should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this
kept,

stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,

Some one might show it at a joist of arms.

Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the
Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
dregs

Upon the hidden bases of the hills."

So might some old man speak in the
aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But how much honour and much fame
were lost.'

So spake he, combed with his own
conceit.

And hid Excalibur the second time,

And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur, breathing
heavily :

'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere :

'I heard the water lapping on the oar,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much
in wrath :

"Ah, miserable and traitor, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,

Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou
art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all.

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the
noon,

And flaming (round and round), and
whirl'd in an arch,

Shone like a streamer of the northern moon,
Seen where the narrow isles of winter
shook:

By sight, with noises of the northern sea
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :

But ere he dip't the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful.

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

' Now see I by thine eyes that this is done. Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ? '

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

' Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw, Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die, Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him :

But when I look'd again, behold an arm, Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

' My sword draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm, And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere

Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not words.

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear, ' Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry Before." His own thought drove him, like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves

And barren chasins, and all to left and right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake, And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern, Beneath them ; and descending they were ware

That all the decks were dense with stately forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream —by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
 And, as it were one voice, an agony
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
 All night in a waste land, where no one
 Comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
 world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in
 the barge,'

And to the barge they came. There those
 three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King,
 and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them all
 And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
 chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complaining
 loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his brow
 Striped with dark blood : for all his face
 was white

And colourless, and like the wither'd
 moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
 east :

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
 with drops

Of onset; and the light and lustrous
 curl—

That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the dais-throne—were parch'd
 with dust :

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that
 fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in
 rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
 charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 'Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
 go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my
 eyes ?

For now I see the same old times are
 dead,

When every morning brought a noble
 chance,

And every chance brought out a noble
 knight.

Such times have been not since the light
 that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
 But now the whole ROUND TABLE is
 dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty world ;
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the
 years,

Among new men, strange faces, other
 minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the
 barge :

'The old order changeth, yielding place
 to new,

And God finds Himself in many ways,
 Last one good custom should corrupt the
 world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I
 have done

May He within Himself make pass : be
 thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul : Many things are
 wrought by prayer

That this world dreams of. Wherefore,
 let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or
 goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
prayer

Both for themselves and those who call
them friend?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of
God.

But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-
lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer
sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound.

So said he, and the barge with oar and
sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of
dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light,
that long

Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,
flared and fell:

At which the Parson, sent to sleep with
sound,

And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!'
but we

Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he
spoke—

Perhaps some modern touches here and
there

Redeem'd it from the charge of nothing-
ness—

Or else we loved the man, and prized his
work;

I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time of
year

The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-
used,

'There now—that's nothing!' drew a
little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd
log,

That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I
seem'd

To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when
dreams

Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a
crowd,

There came a bark that, blowing forward,
bore

King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.'

Then those that stood upon the hills
behind

Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as
fair!'

And, further inland, voices echoed—
'Come

With all good things, and war shall be no
more.'

At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard
indeed

The clear church-bells ring in the
Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER:

OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Linney from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and
he,

Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete
Parton'd in halves between us, that we
grew

The fable of the city where we dwelt.

My Eustace might have sat for
Hercules;

So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
He, by some law that holds in love, and
draws

The greater to the lesser, long desired
A certain miracle of symmetry,
A miniature of loveliness, all grace
Summ'd up and clos'd in little; -Juliet,
she

So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she
To me myself, for some three careless
months,

The summer pilot of an empty heart
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you
me

Such touches are but embassies of love,
To tamper with the feelings ere he found
Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,
And said to me, she sitting with us then,
'When will you paint like this?' and I
replied,

(My words were half in earnest, half in
jest.)

'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,
unperceived,

A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made
those eyes

Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair

More black than ashbuds in the front of
March.'

And Juliet answer'd laughing, 'Go and
see'

The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after
that,

You never can fail to watch his master-
piece.'

And up we rose, and on the spur we went.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it:
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you
hear

The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad
-stream,

That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd
kine,
And all about the large-lime furrows-low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous
wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in her-
self,

Grew, seldom seen: not less among us
lived

Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not
heard

Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter?
Where was he,

So blunt in memory, so cold in heart.

At such a distance from his youth in grief,
That, having seen, forgot? The common
mouth,

So gross to express delight, in praise of
her

Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
 And Beauty such a mistress of the world,
 And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
 Would play with flying forms and images,
 Yet this is also true, that, long before
 I look'd upon her, when I heard her name
 My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
 And told me I should love. A crowd of
 hopes,
 That sought to sow themselves like
 winged seeds,
 Born out of everything I heard and saw,
 Flutter'd about my senses and my soul ;
 And vague desires, like fitful blasts of balm
 To one that travels quickly, made the air
 Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
 That verged upon them, sweeter than the
 dream
 Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark
 East,
 Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.
 And sure this orbit of the memory folds
 For ever in itself the day we went
 To see her. All the land in flowery
 squares,
 Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
 Smelt of the coming summer, as one large
 cloud
 Drew downward · but all else of heaven
 was pure
 Up to the Sun, and May from verge to
 verge,
 And May with me from head to heel.
 And now,
 As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were
 The hour just flown, that morn with all
 its sound,
 (For those old Mays had thrice the life of
 these,)
 Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to
 graze,
 And, where the hedge-row cuts the path-
 way, stood,

Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,
 And lowing to his fellows. From the
 woods
 Came voices of the well-contented doves.
 The lark could scarce get out his notes
 for joy,
 But shook his song together as he near'd
 His happy home, the ground. To left
 and right,
 The cuckoo told his name to all the hills ;
 The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;
 The redcap whistled ; and the nightingale
 Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.
 And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said
 to me,
 'Hear how the bushes echo ! by my life,
 These birds have joyful thoughts. Think
 you they sing
 Like poets, from the vanity of song?
 Or have they any sense of why they sing?
 And would they praise the heavens for
 what they have ?'
 And I made answer, ' Were there nothing
 else
 For which to praise the heavens but
 only love,
 That only love were cause enough for
 praise.'
 Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read my
 thought,
 And on we went ; but ere an hour had
 pass'd,
 We reach'd a meadow slanting to the
 North ;
 Down which a well-worn pathway courted
 us
 To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;
 This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
 Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly
 pruned ;
 And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume,
 blew
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.

The garden stretches southward. In the
midst

A cedar spread his dark-green layers of
shade.

The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily
The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.

'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps
the house.'

He nodded, but a moment afterwards

He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he
could I turn'd,

And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.

For up the porch these grew an
Eastern rose,

That, flowering high, the last night's gale
had caught,

And blown across the walk. One arm
aloft—

Down'd in pure white, that fitted to the
shape—

Holding the bush, to fix it back, she
stood.

A single stream of all her soft brown hair
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the
flowers

Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—

Ah, happy shade—and still went waver-
ing down,

But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might
have danced

The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
And mix'd with shadows of the common
ground!

But the full day dwelt on her brows, and
sunn'd

Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,
And double'd his own warmth against her
lips,

And on the bounteous wave of such a
breast

As never pencil drew. Half light, half
shade,

She stood, a sight to make an old man
young.

So rapt, we near'd the house: but she,
a Rose

In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
Nor heard us come, nor from her ten-
ance turn'd

Into the world without; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmur broke the stillness of that
air

Which brooded round about her:

'Ah, one rose.

One rose, but one, by those fair fingers
cull'd,

Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on
lips

Less exquisite than thine.'

She look'd: but all
Suffus'd with blushes—neither self-
possess'd

Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and
that,

Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and turn-
ing, wound

Her looser hair in braid, and stir'd her
lips

For some sweet answer, tho' no answer
came,

Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And mov'd away, and left me, statue-
like,

In act to render thanks.

I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there
Till every daisy slept, and Love's white
star

Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the
dusk.

So long we went, and all the livelong
way

With solemn gibe and Eustace banter me.

'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the top
of Art.

You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
The Titianic Flora. Will you match
My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master,
Love,

A more ideal Artist he than all.'

So home I went, but could not sleep
for joy,

Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and
o'er,

And shaping faithful record of the glance
That graced the giving—such a noise of
life

Swarm'd in the golden present, such a
voice

Call'd to me from the years to come, and
such

A length of bright horizon rimm'd the
dark.

And all that night I heard the watchman
peal

The sliding season : all that night I heard
The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy
hours.

The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
Distilling odours on me as they went
To greet their fairer sisters of the East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and heir
to all,

Made this night thus. Henceforward
squall nor storm

Could keep me from that Eden where
she dwelt.

Light pretexts drew me : sometimes a
Dutch love

For tulips ; then for roses, moss or musk,
To grace my city-rooms ; or fruits and
cream

Served in the weeping elm ; and more
and more

A word could bring the colour to my
check ;

A thought would fill my eyes with happy
dew ;

Love trebled life within me, and with
each

The year increased.

The daughters of the year,

One after one, thro' that still garden
pass'd :

Each garlanded with her peculiar flower
Danced into light, and died into the
shade ;

And each in passing touch'd with some
new grace

Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by
day,

Like one that never can be wholly known,
Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought
an hour

For Eustace, when I heard his deep 'I
will,'

Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to
hold

From thence thro' all the worlds : but I
rose up

Full of his bliss, and following her dark
eyes

Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reach'd
The wicket-gate, and found her standing
there.

There sat we down upon a garden
mound,

Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the third,
Between us, in the circle of his arms

Enwound us both ; and over many a
range

Of waning lime the gray cathedral towers,
Across a hazy glimmer of the west,

Reveal'd their shining windows : from
them clash'd

The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time
we play'd ;

We spoke of other things ; we coursed
 about
 The subject most at heart, more near
 and near,
 Like doves about a dove-cote, wheeling
 round
 The central wish, until we settled there.
 Then, in that time and place, I spoke
 to her,
 Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
 Repeating at her hand the greatest gift,
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved ;
 And in that time and place she answer'd
 me,
 And in the compass of three little words,
 More musical than ever came in one,
 The silver fragments of a broken voice,
 Made me most happy, faltering, ' I am
 thine.'
 Shall I cease here? Is this enough to
 say
 That my desire, like all strongest hopes,
 By its own energy fulfill'd itself,
 Merged in completion? Would you
 learn at full
 How passion rose thro' circumstantial
 means—
 Beyond all grades develop'd? and indeed
 I had not much to say to tell you all,
 But while I mused came Memory with
 sad eyes,
 Holding the folded annals of my youth ;
 And while I mused, Love with faint
 brows went by,
 And with a flying finger swept my lips,
 And spake, ' Be wise : not easily for-
 given
 Are those, who setting wide the doors
 that bar
 The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
 Let in the day.' Here, then, my words
 have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
 wells—
 Of that which came between, more sweet
 than each,
 In whispers, like the whispers of the
 leaves
 That tremble round a nightingale—in
 sighs
 Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-
 ance,
 Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I
 not tell
 Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
 given,
 And vows, where there was never need
 of vows,
 And kisses, where the heart on one wild
 leap
 Hung transcend from all pulsation, as above
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces
 pale
 Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting
 stars :
 Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-
 lit,
 Spread the light blue along the river-
 shores,
 And in the hollows ; or as soon we met
 Unheeded, tho' beneath a whispering rain
 Night slid down one long stream of
 sighing wind,
 And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.
 But this whole hour your eyes have
 been intent
 On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what it
 hath
 May not be said on by the common day.
 This picture has prepared thee. Raise
 thy soul :
 Make thine heart, busy with thine eyes :
 the time
 Is come to take the veil.
 Behold her there,

As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,
My first, last love ; the idol of my youth,
The darling of my manhood, and, alas !
Now the most blessed memory of mine
age.

DORA.

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at
them,
And often thought, 'I'll make them man
and wife.'
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William ; but the
youth, because
He had been always with her in the
house,
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said,
'My son :
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die:
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora ; she is well
To look to ; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter : he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and
he died
In foreign lands ; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora : take her for your
wife ;
For I have wish'd this marriage, night
and day,
For many years.' But William answer'd
short ;
'I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,
I will not marry Dora.' Then the old
man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
and said :

'You will not, boy ! you dare to answer
thus !
But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to
it ;
Consider, William : take a month to
think,
And let me have an answer to my wish ;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall
pack,
And never more darken my doors again.'
But William answer'd madly ; bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd
at her
The less he liked her ; and his ways were
harsh ;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then
before
The month was out he left his father's
house,
And hired himself to work within the
fields ;
And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and
wed
A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd
His niece and said : 'My girl, I love you
well ;
But if you speak with him that was my
son,
Or change a word with her he calls his
wife,
My home is none of yours. My will is
law.'
And Dora promised, being meek. She
thought,
'It cannot be : my uncle's mind will
change !'
And days went on, and there was born
a boy
To William ; then distresses came on him ;
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate,

Heart-broken, and his father help'd him
not.

But Dora stored what little she could save,
And sent it them by stealth, nor did they
know

Who sent it : till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And bow'd with distress upon her boy, and
thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and
said :

'I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he
abuse,

And for this orphan, I am come to you :
You know there has not been for these
five years

So full a harvest : let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat ; that when his heart
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone.'

And Dora took the child, and went her
way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies
grow.

Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not ; for none of all his
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;
And Dora would have risen and gone to
him,

But her heart fail'd her ; and the reapers
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose
and took

The child once more, and sat upon the
mound :

And made a little wreath of all the flowers
That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in his uncle's eye.
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his sowing work,
And came and said : 'Where were you
yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing
here ?'

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
And answer'd softly, 'This is William's
child !'

'And did I not,' said Allan, 'did I not
Forbid you, Dora ?' Dora said again :
'Do with me as you will, but take the
child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone !'

And Allan said, 'I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you !
You knew my word was law, and yet you
dare!

To slight it. Well—for I will take the
boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more.'
So saying, he took the boy, that cried
aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of
flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her
hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the
field.

More and more distant. She bow'd down
her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,
And all the things that had been. She
bow'd down

And wept in secret; and the reapers
reap'd.

And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and
stood

Upon the thresh'd. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in
praise

To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, 'My uncle took the boy;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you:
He says that he will never see me more.'
Then answer'd Mary, 'This shall never
be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on
thyself :

And, now I think, he shall not have the
boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to
-light

His mother : therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him
home ;

And I will beg of him to take thee back :
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one
house,

And work for William's child, until he
grows
Of age to help us.'

So the women kiss'd
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the
farm.

The door was off the latch : they peep'd,
and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's
knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the
cheeks,

Like one that loved him : and the lad
stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the
fire.

Then they came in : but when the boy
beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her :
And Allan set him down, and Mary said:

'O Father!—if you let me call you so—

I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child ; but now I
come

For Dora : take her back ; she loves you
well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at
peace

With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he
said,

He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife : but, Sir, he
said

That he was wrong to cross his father thus :
"God bless him !" he said, "and may
he never know

The troubles I have gone thro' !" Then
he turn'd

His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to
slight

His father's memory ; and take Dora back
And let all this be as it was before.'

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room ;
And all at once the old man burst in
sobs:—

'I have been to blame—to blame. I
have kill'd my son.

I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my
dear son.

May God forgive me!—I have been to
blame.

Kiss me, my children.'

Then they clung about

The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many
times.

And all his man was broken with remorse;
And all his love came back a hundred-
fold;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
William's child

Thinking of William.

So these four abode
Within one house together; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another taste;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

AUDLEY COURT.

'THE Bull, the Fleeces are cramm'd, and
not a room

For love or money. Let us picnic there
At Audley Court.'

I spoke, while Audley feast
Hum'd like a hive all round the narrow
quay,

To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
To Francis just alighted from the boat.
And breathing of the sea. 'With all my
heart,'

said Francis. Then we should'er'd thro'
the swarm,

And round'd by the silliness of the beach
To where the bay runs up its latest horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd
The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
Of meadow smooth from aftermath we
reach'd

The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro'
all

The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,
And cross'd the garden to the gardener's
lodge,

With all its casements bedded, and its
walls

And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Francis
sat

A dismal raptur wrapp'd with head and
hands,

Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of
home,

And, half out-slow'd, a gony centlynnule,
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret
lay,

Like fossils of the rock, with golden
yolks

Imbedded and injellied; last, with them,
A flask of cider from his father's vat.

Prime, whiff'd I knew; and so we sat and
eat

And talk'd old matters over: who was
dead,

Who married, who was like to be, and
how

The races went, and who would rent the
hall:

Then touch'd upon the game, how ~~was~~
it was

This season; glancing thence, discuss'd
the farm,

The four-field system, and the price of
grain;

And track upon the cow-lews, where we
split,

And came again together on the king
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;

And, while the blackbird on the pippin
lard,

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and
sang--

'Oh! who would fight and march and
countermarch,

Be shot for slapsness in a battle-field,
And shovell'd up into some bloody trench,

Where no one knows? but let me live
my life.

'Oh! who would east and balance at
a desk,

Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,

Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints
Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.

'Who'd serve the state? for if I carved
my name

Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,
I might as well have traced it in the sands;
The sea wastes all: but let me live my
life.

'Oh! who would love? I woo'd a
woman once,

But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a
thorn

Turns from the sea; but let me live my
life.'

He sang his song, and I replied with
mine:

I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir
Robert's pride,

His looks—the more the pity, so I said—
Came to the hammer here in March—
and this—

I set the words, and added names I knew.

'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream
of me:

Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is
mine.

'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

'Sleep, breathing health and peace
upon her breast:

Sleep, breathing love and trust against
her lip:

I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.

'I go, but I return: I would I were
The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of
me.'

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,
My friend; and I, that having where-
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
Did what I would; but ere the night we
rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that,
just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,
The town was hush'd beneath us: lower
down

The bay was oily calm; the harbour-
buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh
the meadows look

Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hill-side was redder than a
fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see?

No, not the County Member's with the
vane:

Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and
half

A score of gables.

James. That? Sir Edward Head's :
But he's abroad : the place is to be sold.

John. Oh, his. He was not broken.

James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood
That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid
his face

From all men, and commercing with him—
—off.

He lost the sense that handles daily life—
That keeps us all in order more or less—
And sick of home went overseas for
change.

John. And whither?

James. Nay, who knows? he's here
and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with him,
As well as with lieutenant Jocky Dawes.

John. What's that?

James. You saw the man—on Monday,
was it?—

There by the humpback'd willow; half
stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made a
ledge;

And there he caught the younker tickling
trout—

Caught in *flagrante*—what's the Latin
word?—

Delicto: but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that
shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at
doors,

And rummaged like a rat: no servant
stay'd:

The farmer vext packs up his beds and
chairs,

And all his household stuff; and with his
boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him,

What!

You're flitting!' 'Yes, we're flitting,'
says the ghost:

(For they had pack'd the dog along among
the beds.)

'Oh well,' says he, 'you flitting with us
—was—'

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home
again.'

John. He left his wife behind; for I
heard.

James. He left her, yes. I met my
lady once:

A woman like a batt, and harsh as crabs.

John. Oh yet but I remember, ten years
back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then she
was—

You could not light upon a sweeter thing:
A body slight and round, and like a pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin
As clean and white as privet when it
flowers.

James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and
they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat and
dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame
and pride,

New things and old, himself and her, she
sour'd

To what she is: a nature never kind!
Like men, like manners: like breeds like,
they say:

Kind nature is the best: those manners
next

That fit us like a nature second-hand;
Which are indeed the manners of the great.

John. But I had heard it was this bill
that pass'd.

And fear of change at home, that drove
him hence.

James. That was the last drop in the
cup of gall.
I once was near him, when his bailiff
brought
A Chartist pike. You should have seen
him wince
As from a venomous thing : he thought
himself
A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a
cry
Should break his sleep by night, and his
nice eyes
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody
thumbs
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs ; but, sir,
you know
That these two parties still divide the
world—
Of those that want, and those that have :
and still
The same old sore breaks out from age to
age
With much the same result. Now I
myself,
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I
would.
I was at school—a college in the South :
There lived a thayflint near ; we stole his
fruit,
His hens, his eggs ; but there was law
for us ;
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.
She,
With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and
mud.
By night we dragg'd her to the college
tower
From her warm bed, and up the cork-
screw stair
With hand and rope we haled the groan-
ing sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she
pigg'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother
sow,
And but for daily loss of one she loved
As one by one we took them—but for
this—
As never sow was higher in this world—
Might have been happy : but what lot is
pure?
We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.
John. They found you out?
James. Not they.
John. Well—after all—
What know we of the secret of a man ?
His nerves were wrong. What ails us,
who are sound,
That we should mimic this raw fool the
world,
Which charts us all in its coarse blacks
or whites,
As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
To Pity—more from ignorance than will.

But put your best boot forward, or I
fear
That we shall miss the mail : and here it
comes
With five at top : as quaint a four-in-
hand
As you shall see—three pyeballs and a
roan.

EDWIN MORRIS ;
OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a
year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth

Of city life ! I was a sketcher then :
 See here, my long : curves of mountain,
 bridge,
 Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
 When men knew how to build, upon a
 rock

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock :
 And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
 New-comes from the Marpy, million-
 alms.

Here lived the Hills—a Tuferschimmel
 bulk
 Of mellow brickwork on an isle of
 houses.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
 With Edwin Morris and with Edward
 Bull
 The curate ; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the
 names,
 Long learned names of agaric, moss and
 fern,
 Who forged a thousand theories of the
 rocks.
 Who taught me how to skate, to row, to
 swim,
 Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
 His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he
 was
 All perfect, and in the finger nail.

And now I ask'd him of his early life,
 And his first passion ; and he answer'd
 me :
 And well his words became him : was he
 not
 A full-blooded honeycomb of Homage
 Stored from all flowers ? Poet-like he
 spoke.

'My love for Nature is so old as I ;
 But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,

And those rich moonlight moons, my love
 for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,
 Of different ages, like two-stone pines,
 Two-stone, so fondly beautiful,
 To some full music rose and sank the
 sun,

And some full music seem'd to move an
 change

With all the varied changes of the dark,
 And either twilight and the day between :
 For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
 Resolving toward fulfillment, music
 sweet

To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to
 breathe.'

Or this or something like to this he
 spoke.

Then said the fat-faced curate Edward
 Bull,

'I take it, God made the woman for
 the man,

And for the good and increase of the
 world.

A pretty line is well, and that is well,
 To have a dame indoors, that trims us
 up,

And keeps us tidy ; but some untold
 ways

Seem for the flannel writers, and judges,
 Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid
 and.

I say, God made the woman for the man,
 And for the good and increase of the
 world.'

'Passon,' said I, 'you pinch the pipe
 too low :

But I have sudden touches, and can run
 My bath beyond my positive into his :
 That'll be starting after Larry Hill.
 I do not lose the balls upon my cap
 I scarce have other music : yet say on.

What should one give to light on such a
dream?’

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

‘Give?’

Give all thou art,’ he answer'd, and a
light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy
check;

‘I would have hid her needle in my
heart,

To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin: my ears could
hear

Her lightest breath: her least remark
was worth

The experience of the wise. I went and
came;

Her voice fled always thro' the summer
land;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy
days!

The flower of each, those moments when
we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no
more.’

Were not his words delicious, I a
beast

To take them as I did? but something
jar'd;

Whether he spoke too largely; that there
seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-
conceit,

Or over-smoothness: howsoe'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humour, and I said:

‘Friend Edwin, do not think yourself
alone

Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,
As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and
left?

But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein:
I have I think,—Heaven knows—as
much within;

I have, or should have, but for a thought
or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in
her:

It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me
right.’

So spoke I knowing not the things that
were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward
Bull:

‘God make the woman for the use of man,
And for the good and increase of the
world.’

And I and Edwin laugh'd; and now we
paued

About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy
holms

And alders, garden-isles; and now we
left

The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lipping lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the
sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their
crag,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by
him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no
more:

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close ‘Your Letty, only yours;’ and
this

Thrice unrescued. The friendly mist
of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
My craft aground, and heard with beating
heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving
keel :

And out I stept, and up I crept : she
mourn'd,

Like Prosperin in Fane, gathering
flowers :

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ;
and she,

She turn'd, we clos'd, we kiss'd, swore
faith, I breathed

In some new planet : a silent cousin stole
Upon us and departed : 'Leave,' she
cried,

'O leave me !' 'Never, dearest, never :
here

I brave the worst :' and while we stood
like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And puddles yell'd within, and out they
came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. 'What,
with him !

Go' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus) ;
'him !'

I choked. Again they shriek'd the
barbarous—'Him !'

Again with hands of wild rejection 'Go !—
Girl, get you in !' she went—and in one
month

They woulded him to sixty thousand
pounds,

To lands in Kent and manorages in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery
smile

And eternal whither. But for me,

They set an ancient creditor to work :

It seems I broke a close with force and
arms :

There came a mystic token from the king
To greet the sheriff, needlessly annoy'd :

I turn'd, and fled by night, and flying
turn'd :

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below :

I turn'd soon more, I clomb'd (turn'd) to the
storm ;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have
seen

Him since, nor heard of him, nor could
to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps : yet long
ago

I have pardon'd little Letty ; not indeed.

It may be, for her own dear sake but this,
She seems a part of those fresh days to
me ;

For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake
While the prime swallow dips his wing,
or then

While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
The light cloud smoulders on the summer
crag.

ST. SIMÉON STYLITES.

At 'tito' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and crew
of sin,

Urrit for earth, until for heaven, sorry
most

For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
I will not cease to sweep the steps I build
Of saintdom, and to clamour, mourn and
sob,

Battering the gates of heaven with storms
of prayer,

Have mercy, Lord, and take away my
sin.

Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty
God,

This not be all in vain, that thrice ten
years,

Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,
In hangings and beatings, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes
and cramps,

A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and
snow, and now;

And I had hoped that ere this period
closed

Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy
rest,

Requyering not these weather-beaten limbs
The meed of saints, the white robe and
the pain.

O take the meaning, Lord : I do not
breathe,

Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were
still

Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to
bear,

Than were these feel-like tons of sin, that
crush'd

My spirit ere before thee.

O Lord, Lord,

Thou knowest I bore this better at the
first,

For I was strong and hale of body then ;
And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt
away,

Would chatter with the cold, and all my
bones

Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,
I should the whorlings of the owl with
sound

Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-
times—

An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.
Now am I feeble grown ; my end draws
nigh ;

I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I
am,

So that I scarce can hear the people hum
About the column's base, and almost
blind.

And scarce can recognise the fields I
know ;

And both my thighs are rotted with the
dew ;

Yet cease I not to clamour and to cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my weary
head,

Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from
the stone,

Have mercy, mercy : take away my sin.

O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be
saved?

Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more
than I.

For did not all thy martyrs die one death?
For either they were stoned, or crucified,
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn
In twain beneath the ribs ; but I die here
To-day, and whole years long, a life of
death.

Bear witness, if I could have found a way
(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)
More slowly-painful to subdue this home
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,
I had not stinted practice, O my God.

For not alone this pillar-punishment.
Not this alone I bore : but while I lived
In the white convent down the valley
there,

For many weeks about my loins I wore
The rope that haled the buckets from the
well,

Twisted as tight as I could knot the
noose ;

And spake not of it to a single soul,
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,

Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
My brethren marvel'd greatly. More
than this

I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.

Three winters, that my soul might
grow to thee.

I lived up there on yonder mountain side.

My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay

Pent in a nook—close of rugged stones ;

Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist,
and twice

Black'd with thy branding thunder, and
sometimes

Sucking the damps for drink, and eating
not,

Except the spare chance-gift of those that
came

To touch my body and be heal'd, and
live.

And they say then that I work'd miracles—

Whereof my fame is loud amongst man-
kind,

Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou,
O God,

Knowest alone whether this was or no.

Have mercy, mercy ; cover all my sin.

Then, that I might be merciful with
those,

Three years I lived upon a pillar, high

Six cubits, and three years on one of
twelve ;

And twice three years I crouch'd on one
that was—

I went by measure ; last of all, I grew

Twice ten long weary weary years to thee.

That numbers forty cubits from the soil.

I think that I have borne as much as
this—

Or else I dream—and for so long a time,

If I may measure time by your slow light.

And this huge deal, which my sorrow
crowns—

So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,

For that the evil ones come here, and say,

'Dull down, O Simon: thou hast utter'd
lying

For ages—and for ages !' then they pass—

Of penances I cannot have gone thro'.

Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I fall,

Maying for months, in such blind delu-
sions.

That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are
choked.

But yet

Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all
the saints—

Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on
earth

House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-
some food,

And wear warm clothes, and even beasts
have stalls,

I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the
light,

Bow down one thousand and two hundred
times,

To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the
Saints ;

Or in the night, after a little sleep,

I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with crack-
ling frost.

I wear an arid and golden on my
back :

A grating iron collar girds my neck ;

And in my weak, lean arms I lie the
cross.

And strive and wrestle with thee till I die :

O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.

O Lord, thou knowest what a man I
am :

A sinful man, conceived and born in sin—

To thee own nothing ; this is mine of
mine ;

Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for
 this,
 That here come those that worship me?
 Ha! ha!
 They think that I am somewhat. What
 am I?
 The silly people take me for a saint,
 And bring me offerings of fruit and
 flowers:
 And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness
 here)
 Have all in all endured as much, and
 more
 Than many just and holy men, whose
 names
 Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.
 Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
 What is it I can have done to merit this?
 I am a sinner viler than you all.
 It may be I have wrought some miracles,
 And cured some halt and maim'd; but
 what of that?
 It may be, no one, even among the saints,
 May match his pains with mine; but
 what of that?
 Yet do not rise; for you may look on me,
 And in your looking you may kneel to
 God.
 Speak! is there any of you halt or
 maim'd?
 I think you know I have some power
 with Heaven
 From my long penance: let him speak
 his wish.
 Yes, I can heal him. Power goes
 forth from me.
 They say that they are heal'd. Ah, hark!
 they shout
 'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,
 God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
 God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
 Can I work miracles and not be saved?
 This is not told of any. They were saints.

It cannot be but that I shall be saved;
 Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,
 'Behold a saint!'
 And lower voices saint me from above.
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere
 death
 Spreads more and more and more, that
 God hath now
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful
 record all
 My mortal archives.
 O my sons, my sons,
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
 The watcher on the column till the end;
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
 bakes;
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours
 become
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
 From my high nest of penance here pro-
 claim
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side
 Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals I
 lay,
 A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my
 sleeve,
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
 I smote them with the cross; they
 swarm'd again.
 In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd
 my chest:
 They flapp'd my light out as I read: I
 saw
 Their faces grow between me and my
 book;
 With colt-like whinny and with hoggish
 whine
 They burst my prayer. Yet this way was
 left,
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mortify

Your flesh, like me, with scourges and
 with thorns ;
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may
 be, fast
 Whole Lent, and pray. I hardly, with
 slow steps,
 With slow, faint steps, and much exceed-
 ing pain,
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
 that still
 Sing to mine ears. But yield not me the
 praise :
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought
 fit,
 Among the powers and princes of this
 world,
 To make me an example to mankind,
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not
 say
 But that a time may come—yea, even
 now,
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the
 threshold stairs
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
 When you may worship me without
 reproach ;
 For I will leave my relics in your land,
 And you may carve a shrine about my
 dust,
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my
 bones,
 When I am gather'd to the glorious
 saints.
 While I spake then, a sting of shrewd-
 est pain
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike
 change,
 In positing, with a grosser film made
 thick
 Those heavy, heavy eyes. The end ! the
 end !
 Sure'st the end ! What's here ? a *duppe*,
 a shade,

A *shock* of light. Is that the *angel* there
 That holds a crown ? Come, blessed
 brother, come.
 I know thy glittering face. I waited
 long ;
 My brows are ready. What ! deny it
 now ?
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh ! So I
 clutch it. Christ !
 'Tis gone : 'tis here again ; the crown !
 the crown !
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
 Sweet ! sweet ! spikenard, and balm, and
 frankincense.
 Ah ! let me not be fool'd, sweet saint :
 I trust
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet
 for Heaven.
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man of
 God,
 Among you there, and let him presently
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
 And climbing up into my airy home,
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament ;
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
 A quarter before twelve.
 But thou, O Lord,
 Aid all this foolish people ; let them take
 Example, pattern : lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind the hill ;
 Once more before my face
 I see the monster'd Abbey-walls,
 That stand within the cypress
 Beyond the lodge the city lies,
 Beneath its drift of smoke ;
 And ah ! with what delighted eyes
 I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
 Ere that, which in me burn'd,
 The love, that makes me thrice a man,
 Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field
 I spoke without restraint,
 And with a larger faith appear'd
 Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
 And told him of my choice,
 Until he plagiarised a heart,
 And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
 None else could understand ;
 I found him garrulously given,
 A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
 Is many a weary hour ;
 'Twere well to question him, and try
 If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
 Broad Oak of Sumner-chace,
 Whose topmost branches can discern
 The roofs of Sumner-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
 If ever maid or spouse,
 As fair as my Olivia, came
 To rest beneath thy boughs. —

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here
 Whatever maiden grace
 The good old Summers, year by year
 Made ripe in Sumner-chace :

'Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
 And, is-uing shorn and sleek,
 Would twist his girdle tight, and put
 The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
 And number'd bead, and shrift,
 Bluff Harry broke into the spence
 And turn'd the cows adrift :

'And I have seen some score of those
 Fresh faces, that would thrive
 When his man-minded offset rose
 To chase the deer at five ;

'And all that from the town would stroll,
 Till that wild wind made work
 In which the gloomy brewer's soul
 Went by me, like a stork :

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
 And others, passing praise,
 Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
 For puritanic stays :

'And I have shadow'd many a group
 Of beauties, that were born
 In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
 Or while the patch was worn ;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
 About me leap'd and laugh'd
 The modest Cupid of the day,
 And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick
 Each leaf into a gall)
 This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
 Is three times worth them all ;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
 Have faded long ago ;
 But in these latter springs I saw
 Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the greens
 A baby-germ, to when
 The maiden blossoms of her teens
 Could number five from ten.

'I wove, by leaf and wind, and rain,

(And hear me with thine ears.)

That, tho' I rattle in the grain

Five hundred fangs of years—

'Yes, since I first could see a shade,

And hence creature pass—

So lightly, musically made,

So light upon the grass ;

'I fit us to fates, that will fit

Toon the (the grassward) fash,

I hold them exquisitely knit,

But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,

And overlook the chace ;

And from thy topmost branch discern

The roof of Summer place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,

That oft hast heard my vows,

I venture when last Olivia came

To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fair

Was hidden at the town ;

Her father left his good arm-chair,

And rode his hunter down.

And with him Albert came to his

I look'd at him with joy ;

As crows'lip unto oxlip do,

So seems she to the boy,

'As hear had just—ah, sitting straight

Within the low-wheel'd chaise.

Her mantle trundled to the gate

Toward the dappled gray.

'That, as for her, she stay'd at home,

And on the roof she went,

And down the way just now to come,

She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut

Up on the towel'd stall ;

She left the new piano shut :

She could not please herself

'Then ran she, gamsome as the roe,

And livelier than a lark

She sent her voice thro' all the holt

Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,

And in the chase grew wild,

As close as might be would he cling

About the darling child :

'But light as any wind that blows

So fleetly did she stir,

The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,

And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me play'd,

And sang to me the whole

Of those three stanzas that you made

About my "giant beds" :

'And in a fit of frolic mirth

She strove to span my waist :

Alas, I was so broad of girth,

I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech

That here beside me stands,

That round me, clasping each in end,

She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet wond' the pressure thrice as sweet

As woodbine's fang in fold,

O when I feel about my foot

The berried briony fold.'

O wiffle round thy knees with feet,

And shade Summer chace !

Long may thy crows'lip touch down

The roof of Summer place !

But tell me, did she read the name
 I carved with many vows—
 When last with throbbing heart I came
 To rest beneath thy boughs?

‘O yes, she wander’d round and round
 These knotted knees of mine,
 And I found, and kiss’d the name she found,
 And sweetly murmur’d thine.

‘A tremor, trembled from its source,
 And down my surface crept.
 My sense of touch is something coarse—
 But I believe she wept.

‘Thou flush’d her cheek with rosy light,
 She glanced across the plain:
 But not a creature was in sight:
 She kiss’d me once again.

‘Her kisses were so close and kind,
 That, trust me on my word,
 Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
 But yet my sap was stirr’d:

‘And even into my inmost ring
 A pleasure I discern’d,
 Like those blind motions of the Spring,
 That show the year is turn’d.

‘Thrice-happy he that may caress
 The ringlet’s waving balm—
 The cushions of whose touch may press
 The maiden’s tender palm.

‘I, rooted here among the groves,
 But languidly adjust
 My vapid vegetable loves
 With anthers and with dust:

‘I feel: my friend, the days were brief
 Whereof the poets talk,
 When that, which breathes within the leaf,
 Could slip its link, and walk.

‘But could I, as in times foregone,
 From spray, and branch, and stem,
 Have suck’d and gather’d into one
 The life that spreads in them,

‘She had not found me so remis;
 But lightly issuing thro’,
 I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
 With usury thereto.’

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
 And overlook the lea,
 Pursue thy loves among the bowers
 But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish hidden deep in fern,
 Old oak, I love thee well;
 A thousand thanks for what I learn
 And what remains to tell.

‘’Tis little more: the day was warm;
 At last, tired out with play,
 She sank her head upon her arm
 And at my feet she lay.

‘Her eyelids dropp’d their silken eaves,
 I breathed upon her eyes
 Thro’ all the summer of my leaves
 A welcome mix’d with sighs.

‘I took the swarming sound of life—
 The music from the town—
 The murmurs of the drum and fife
 And lull’d them in my own.

‘Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
 To light her shaded eye;
 A second flutter’d round her lip
 Like a golden butterfly;

‘A third would glimmer on her neck
 To make the necklace shine;
 Another slid, a sunny fleck,
 From head to ankle fine.

'Then close and dank my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

'But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And hung him in the dew.

'And yet it was a grateful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

'I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass,
O kiss him once for me.

'O kiss him twice and thrice for him
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this.'

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro' the glens,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Sumner-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blessed,
That but is unpossess'd by
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To riper life may magnify
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms increase,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never law be madeless there,
Nor wielded axe despoil thee,
That art the laureate's park and tree
From leas to Laurel-point.

O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgled sweet !
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !

All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes !
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver skies !

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep !

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-hall
In wenchdom on her hair.

And I will write in rhyme and rhyms,
And print thy name in ballad
Thou hast lov'd forest's heart on line,
Or that Thimbleton groweth.

It will be the worthy cognitive oak,
And my old antique spoke ;
And once thou English's honours that,
For some of us, remain.

Wherein the younger Charles abode
 Till all the paths were dim,
 And far below the Roundhead rode,
 And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

OF love that never found his earthly close,
 What sequel? Streaming eyes and break-
 ing hearts?
 Or all the same as if he had not been?
 Not so. Shall Error in the round of
 time
 Still father Truth? O shall the braggart
 shout
 For some blind glimpse of freedom work
 itself
 Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
 System and empire? Sin itself be found
 The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?
 And only he, this wonder, dead, become
 Mere highway dust? or year by year alone
 Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
 Nightmare of youth, the spectre of him-
 self?
 If this were thus, if this, indeed, were
 all,
 Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
 The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless
 days,
 The long mechanic paeings to and fro,
 The set gray life, and apathetic end.
 But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
 O three times less unworthy! likewise
 thou
 Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy
 years
 The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
 Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will
 bring
 The drooping flower of knowledge
 changed to fruit

Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in
 Time,
 And that which shapes it to some perfect
 end.
 Will some one say, Then why not ill
 for good?
 Why took ye not your pastime? To that
 man
 My work shall answer, since I knew the
 right
 And did it; for a man is not as God,
 But then most Godlike being most a man.
 —So let me think 'tis well for thee and
 me—
 Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
 Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart
 so slow
 To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to
 me,
 When eyes, love-languid thro' half-tears
 would dwell
 One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
 Then not to dare to see! when thy low
 voice,
 Faltering, would break its syllables, to
 keep
 My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a
 leash,
 And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
 And on thy bosom, (deep-desired relief!)
 Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
 weigh'd
 Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!
 For Love himself took part against
 himself
 To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—
 O this world's curse,—beloved but hated
 —came
 Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and
 mine,
 And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy
 bride,'
 She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is laid
To plain ears, I did not speak to those—
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me—
Hark! he say down and thine: thou
knowest it all.

Could Love part thus? was it not well
to speak,
To have spoken mee? It could not but
be well.

The slow sweet hours that bring us all
things good,
The slow sad hours that bring us all
things ill,
And all good things from evil, brought
the night

In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hallow'd all the
heart,

Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such
tears

As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and
died.

Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the
words

That make a man feel strong in speaking
truth;

Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The light of sunset and of sunrise mix'd,
In that brief night; the summer night,
the passed

Among her stars to hear us; stars that
hung

Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of
Time

Span round in station, but the end had
come.

O then like those, who clench their
nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two ran,
Thine—losing like an individual life—
In one loud cry of passion and of pain,
Like little accusation es'n'toated,
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd
it,
And bade adieu for ever.

Love—yet love—
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing
all

Life needs for life is possible to will
Love happy; tend thy flowers; be remand
by

My blessing! Should my Shadow cross
thy thoughts

Too sadly for their peace, remand it there
For calmer hours to Memory's dark
hold,

If not to be forgotten—not at once—
Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy
dreams,

O might it come like one that looks
content,

With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
And point thee forward to a distant light:
Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart:

And leave thee free, till thou wilt
recollect!

Then when the first low matin-chirp hath
grown

Full quire, and morning driv'n her glow
of pearl

Far farewring into light the crooked rook:
Beyond the fair green field and eastern

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

With you shall have that song which
Lusmau wrote:

It was last summer on a tour in Wales—
The January was with me, we had thy
love

Up Snowden ; and I wish'd for Leonard
there,

And found him in Llanberis : then we
crost

Between the lakes, and clamber'd half
way up

The counter side ; and that same song of
his

He told me ; for I banter'd him, and
swore :

They said he lived shut up within himself,
A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
That, setting the *how much* before the
how,

Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech,
' Give,

Cram us with all,' but count not me the
herd !

To which 'They call me what they
will,' he said :

' But I was born too late : the fair new
forms,

That float about the threshold of an age,
Like nets of Science waiting to be
caught—

Catch me who can, and make the catcher
crowd—

Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.

But if you care indeed to listen, hear
These measured words, my work of
yesternorn.

' We sleep and wake and sleep, but
all things move ;

The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun ;
The dead Earth follows wheel'd in her
ellipse :

And human things returning on them-
selves

Move onward, leading up the golden year.

' Ah, tho' the times, when some new
thought can bud,

Are but the seed-time when they
flow—

Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
Have *to* and flow conditioning their
march,

And slow and sure comes up the golden
year.

' When wealth no more shall rest in
mounded heaps,

But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,

And light shall spread, and man be liker
man

Thro' all the season of the golden year.

' Shall eagles not be eagles ? wrens be
wrens ?

If all the world were falcons, what of that ?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,

But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

' Fly, happy happy sails and bear the
Press ;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross ;
Knit land to land, and blowing haven-
ward

With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of
toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

' But we grow old. Ah ! when shall
all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year ?'

Thus far he flow'd, and ended ; where-
upon

' Ah, folly !' in mimic cadence answer'd
James—

' Ah, folly ! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's
time,

'Tis like the second world to us that live ;
'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on
Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year.'

With that he struck his staff against
 the rocks
 And broke it,—*Janus*,—you know him,
 —old, but full
 Of force and cheer, and firm upon his
 feet,
 And like an oxen stuck in winter
 woods,
 Cry'd aloud with the heavy plowman,
 Take heed, all in heat :
 'What stuff is this ;
 Old wives' pres'd the happy season
 back,—
 The more fools they,—we farmers
 dreamers both :
 You must, that in an age, when every
 hour
 Must sweat her sixty minutes to the
 death,
 Live on, God love us, as if the scoldman,
 rapt
 Upon the reeking harvest, should not
 plunge
 His hand into the bag : but well I know
 That unto him who works, and truly he
 works,
 This waste ground year is over at the
 doors.'

He spoke ; and, high above, I heard
 them bless
 The *sea* *stone*-quarry, and the great echo
 flap
 And buffet round the hills from bluff to
 bluff.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren
 crags,
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and
 dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,

That bound, and sleep, and feed, and
 know not me.
 I cannot see from Troy ; I will drink
 Life to the lees ; all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with
 those
 That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and
 who
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
 Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of
 men
 And manners, climates, councils, govern-
 ments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them
 all ;
 And drunk delight of battle with my
 peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy,
 I am a part of all that I have met ;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose
 margin fides
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make no sound,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine for use ;
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled
 on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains : but every hour is saved
 From that ungodly, ungodly,
 ungodly
 A jingling of new things ; and yet it was
 But some three suns to store and hoard
 myself,
 And this gray spirit yeilding in mine
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human
 thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labour, by slow prudence to make
 mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the
 sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work,
 I mine.
 There lies the port: the vessel puffs
 her sail:
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My
 mariners,
 souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and
 thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and
 opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I
 are old;
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
 Death closes all: but something ere the
 end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be
 done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with
 Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the
 rocks:
 The long day wanes: the slow moon
 climbs: the deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come,
 my friends,
 Time is not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose
 holds
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:

It may be we shall touch the Happy
 Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we
 knew.
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and
 tho'
 We are not now that strength which in
 old days
 Moved earth and heaven; that which we
 are, we are;
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong
 in will
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
 yield.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA
 IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man
 To rule by land and sea,
 Strong mother of a Lion-line,
 Be proud of those strong sons of thine
 Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder, if in noble heat
 Those men thine arms withstood,
 Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,
 And in thy spirit with thee fought—
 Who sprang from English blood!

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
 Lift up thy rocky face,
 And shatter, when the storms are black,
 In many a streaming torrent back,
 The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law
 The growing world assume,
 Thy work is thine—The single note
 From that deep chord which Hampden
 smote
 Will vibrate to the doom.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,

The vapours wrap their bottom to the
ground,

Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,

And after many a summer dies the swan—
Me only cruel immortality

Consumes : I wither slowly in thy arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,

A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream

The ever-silent spaces of the East.

Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of
imm.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a
man—

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd

That is great heart none other than a God !
I ask'd thee, ' Give me immortality.'

Then didst thou grant mine asking with a
smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how they
give—

But thy stone, Hades' insidious work'd
their wills,

And beat me down and marr'd and wast'
me,

And tho' they would not and just left me
mair'd

To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,

And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,

Close over us, the silver star, thy gulf,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill
with tears

To bear me ? Let me go : take back thy
gift :

Why should a man desire in any way

To vary from the kindly race of man,

Or pass beyond the goal of evilness—

Where all should pause, as is meet need
for all ?

A soft air fans the shroud apart : thou
comes

A glimpse of that dark world where I was
born.

Once more the old mysterious glimmer
seals

From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,

And bosom beating with a heart renew'd—

Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,

Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to
mine,

But yet they blind the stars, and the wild
imm.

Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,
arise,

And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,

And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

See ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
in silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy name is on my lips.

Why wilt thou ever weep me with thy
tears,

And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
in days long since, on that dark earth, is
true ?

' The Gods themselves cannot recall their
gifts.'

As thou'lt be met with what another
loves

In days far-off, and with what other eyes
 I need to watch — if I be he that watch'd! —
 The lucid outline forming round thee:
 saw
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
 Changed with thy mystic change, and felt
 my blood
 Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd
 all
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-
 warm
 With *lips* belmter than half opening
 had.
 Of April, and could hear the lips that
 kiss'd
 Whispering I knew not what of wild and
 sweet,
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo
 sing,
 While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East:
 How can my nature longer mix with
 thine?
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled
 feet
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the
 steam
 Floats up from those dim fields about the
 homes
 Of happy men that have the power to
 die,
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead
 Release me, and restore me to the
 ground;
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
 grave:
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
 morn;
 I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:

When I cast into the future for a human eye could see ;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be. —

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, ' My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, ' I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;'
Saying, ' Dost thou love me, cousin ?' weeping, ' I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my palace with the fallows of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, true as mine !
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falsar than all fancy fathoms, falsar than all songs have sung,
Foppet to a father's thimble, and servile to a shepherd's tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ? —having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower in his love day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with me.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art marred with a crown,
And the grossness of his crown will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy : think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth !
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule !
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool !

Well—'tis well that I should bluster !—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit ?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the mind ?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move :
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore ?
No—she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the pleasant gales,
And a song from out the distance as the ringing of thine ears:

And an eye shall vex thee, looking anxious business on thy face:
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry,
'Take care! bid than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Soft lips will land^{er} me down: my latest rival brings thee rest,
Biting fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child has outdone the father with a clearness not his own,
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt;
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—dost thou yet—be happy!—wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow,
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the merriment his marrow, rattling at each other's heels.

Can I not rally in success?—I will turn that surly page,
Blame you from my deep emotion, O thou wanton Matthev Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy whom erst he leaves his father's side.

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Shine in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit bids within him to be gone, leaving him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new :
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do :

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be ;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales ;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm ;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were fur'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
 Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine.

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
 Escap'd in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ;—
 I was left a mangled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

O! to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
 On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Large constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
 Breaths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
 Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
 Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
 In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space
 I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
 Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
 Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Ugh! again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,
 Boy I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
 Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squallid savage—what to me were sun or flame ?
 I the heir of all things, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
 Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
 I of the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
 Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

I waited for the train at Coventry ;

*I stood, with gown and pinner at the
rails.*

*I watch the three tall spires ; and there
I caught*

The city's doom at legend into this : —

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but

Did none, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
The Coventry for when he laid a tax

Upon his town, and all the mothers
trouble

Thus clamouring, ' If we pay,
we starve !'

She sought her lord, and found him,
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His hand a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of these
tears,

And pray'd him, ' If they pay this tax,
they starve.'

Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
' You would not let your little finger ache
For such as these ?' — ' But I would die,'
said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
Paul :

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;
' O ay, ay, ay, you talk !' — ' Alas !' she
said,

' But prove me what it is I would not do,'
And from a heart as rough as Esau's
hand,

He answer'd, ' Ride you naked thro' the
town,

And I repeal it ;' and nodding, as in
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among his
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and
blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet,
all

The hard condition ; but that she would
loose

The people: therefore, as they loved her well,

From then till noon no foot should pass the street,

No eye look down, she passing; but that all

Should keep within, close shut, and window barr'd.

Then first she to her minst' lowest,
and there

Unclasp'd the wimple tangles of her hair,
The gold hair's gift; but ever as a lincathia

She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half hid in cloud: anon she shook her head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her knee;

Unclad herself in haste; adown the stair
Stole on: and, like a creeping sunbeam,
slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway; there she found her palfrey

tramp:

In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with
chastity:

The deep air listen'd round her as she
pass'd.

And all the low wind hardly breathed for
fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the
spout

Had cunning eyes to see: the barking crew
Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's
footfall shot

Light horrors thro' her panes: the idled
walls

Were full of chinks and holes: and every
head

Frenzied gabbles, crowing, scur'd; but she

she

Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she
saw

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the
field

Glean thro' the gutter aridways in the
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with
chastity:

And one low church, compact of think-
earth.

The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,

Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his
head,

And dropt before him. So the Powers,
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense man-
used:

And she, that knew not, pass'd: and all
at once.

With twelve great shocks of sound, the
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a
hundred towers.

One after one: but even then she gain'd
Her tower; white, rousing, white
and crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax away
And built herself an everlasting name.

THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak:

A pleasant hour has passed away

White, streaming on your dawn's cheek.

The dewy moss-cyphils lay.

As by the lattice you reclined,

I went thro' many wayward moods

To see you dreaming—and, behind,

A summer crisp with shining wash.

And I too dream'd, until at last
 Across my fancy, brooding warm,
 The reflex of a legend past,
 And loosely settled into form.
 And would you have the thought I had,
 And see the vision that I saw,
 Then take the broidery-frame, and add
 A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
 And I will tell it. Turn your face,
 Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
 The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
 And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
 Clothes and reclothes the happy plains ;
 Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins.
 Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
 The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
 Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs :
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.
 The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
 Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
 Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and
 there
 The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair ;
 The page has caught her hand in his :
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
 His own are pouted to a kiss :
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble
 wine.
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
 His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood ;
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, bur and brake and
 briar,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace-spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of
 men?
 Here all things in their place remain,
 As all were order'd, ages since.
 Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and
 Pain,
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
 She lying on her couch alone,
 Across the purpled coverlet,
 The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
 On either side her tranced form
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
 Languidly ever ; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond bright :
 Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with light.

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
 In palace chambers far apart.
 The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
 That lie upon her charmed heart.
 She sleeps ; on either hand upswells
 The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest
 She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
 A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
 To those that seek them issue forth :
 For love in sequel works with fate,
 And draws the veil from hidden worth.
 He travels far from other skies—
 His mantle glitters on the rocks—
 A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes—
 And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
 That strove in other days to pass,
 Are wither'd in the thorny close,
 Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
 He gazes on the silent dead :
 'They perish'd in their daring deeds.'
 This proverb flashes thro' his head,
 'The many fail : the one succeeds.'

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks :
 He breaks the hedge : he enters there :
 The colour flies into his cheeks :
 He trusts to light on something fair ;
 For all his life the charm did talk
 About his path, and hover near
 With words of promise in his walk,
 And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind :
 The Magic Music in his heart
 Beats quick and quicker, till he find
 The quiet chamber far apart.
 His spirit flutters like a lark,
 He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.
 'Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
 How dark those hidden eyes must be !'

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was napt,
 There rose a noise of striking clocks,
 And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
 And barking dogs, and crowing
 cocks :
 A fuller light illumined all,
 A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
 A sudden hillside shook the hall,
 And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
 The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
 The fire shot up, the martin flew,
 The parrot scream'd, the peacock
 squall'd,
 The maid and page renew'd their strife,
 The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and
 clackt,
 And all the long-pent stream of life
 Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
 And in his chair himself appear'd.
 And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and
 spoke,
 'My holy rood, a royal beard !
 How say you ? we have slept, my lords.
 My beard has grown into my lap.'
 The barons swore, with many words,
 'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

'Pardy,' return'd the king, 'but still
 My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
 My lord, and shall we pass the bill
 I mention'd half an hour ago ?'
 The chancellor, sedate and vain,
 In courteous words return'd reply :
 He dallied with his golden chain,
 And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
 And round her waist she felt it fold,
 And far across the hills they went
 In that new world which is the old :
 Across the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 And deep into the dying day
 The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

I'd sleep another hundred years,
 O love, for such another kiss ;'
 'O wake for ever, love,' she hears,
 'O love, 'twas such as this and this.'
 And o'er them many a sliding star,
 And many a merry wind was borne,
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
 The twilight melted into morn.

III.

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep !'
 'O happy sleep, that lightly fled !'
 'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !'
 'O love, thy kiss would wake the
 dead !'
 And o'er them many a flowing range
 Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
 The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

'A hundred summers ! can it be ?
 And whither goest thou, tell me where ?'
 'O seek my father's court with me,
 For there are greater wonders there.'
 And o'er the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 Beyond the night, across the day,
 Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
 And if you find no moral there,
 Go, look in any glass and say,
 What moral is in being fair.
 Oh, to what uses shall we put
 The wildweed - flower that simply
 blows?
 And is there any moral shut
 Within the bosom of the rose ?

ii.

But any man that walks the road,
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
 Accounting as his kindest find,
 A meaning suited to his mind,
 And liberal applications lie
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;
 So 'twere to erring his use, if I
 Should bind it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

i.

You strike your head. A random stroke
 Your finer female sense offends.
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing
 To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
 To pass with all our social ties
 To silence from the paths of men ;
 And every hundred years to rise
 And learn the world, and sleep again ;
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
 And wake on science grown to more,
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
 And all that else the years will show,
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
 The vast Republics that may grow,
 The Federations and the Powers ;
 Titanic forces taking birth
 In diverse nations, diverse climes ;
 For we are Anchors of the world,
 And in the morning of the times.

ii.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
 Their sunny dream now and then
 Or gay quinqueniads would we reap
 The flower and quintessence of cheer.

(ii.)

Alas, yet would I—and would I might !
 So much your eyes my fancy take—
 Like still the first to leap to light
 That I might kiss them—yes—awake !

For, am I right, or am I wrong,

To choose your own you did not start ;
 You'd have my moral from the song,
 And I will take my pleasure there
 And, am I right or am I wrong,
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
 To search a meaning for the song,
 Perforce will still revert to you ;
 Nor finds a closer truth than this
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
 And evermore a costly kiss
 The prelude to some brighter world.

iv.

For since the time when Adam first
 Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
 And every bird of Eden burst
 In carol, every bud to flower,
 What eyes, like thine, have waken'd
 hopes,
 What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd ?
 Where on the double rosebud droops
 The fullness of the pensive mind ;
 Which all too dearly self-involved,
 Yet sleeps heedless sleep, serene :
 A sleep by kisses undissolved,
 That lets thee neither hear nor see :
 But break it. In the name of wife,
 And in the night that arms may give,
 Are thine'd the mood of thy life,
 And that for which I want to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my key,
 And, if you find a meaning there,
 O whisper to your glass, and say,
 'What wonder, if he thinks me fair ?'
 What wonder I was all unwise,
 To sleep the song for your delight
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
 be hit ?

Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree,
And waster than a warren:
Yet say the neighbours when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.
O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion!
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber!
I said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And tumbled into hornpipes.
The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And Briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.
The rascal broke her reeds and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her.

And down the middle, buzz! she went
With all her bees behind her:
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
Came yews, a dismal coterie;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the
grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree:
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves
Look'd down, half-pleas'd, half-
frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure;
So youthful and so flexible then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the twigs!
And make her dance attendance;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce answer to my whistle;
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass heehaws from the rick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear ? a sound
 Like sleepy counsel pleading ;
 O Lord!—'tis in my neighbour's ground,
 The modern Muses reading.
 They read Botanic Treatises,
 And Works on Gardening thro' there.
 And Methods of transplanting trees
 To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses ! how they press
 O'er books of travell'd seamen,
 And show you slips of all that grows
 From England to Van Diemen.
 They read in arbours clipt and cut,
 And alleys, faded places,
 By squares of tropic summer shut
 And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
 Are neither green nor sappy ;
 Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
 The spindlings look unhappy.
 Better to me the meanest weed,
 That blows upon its mountain,
 The vilest herb that runs to seed
 Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
 And years of cultivation,
 Upon my proper patch of soil
 To grow my own plantation.
 I'll take the showers as they fall,
 I will not vex my bosom :
 Enough if at the end of all
 A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

Down on the convent-roof the snow—
 Are sparkling to the moon :
 My breath to heaven like vapour goes—
 May my soul fulfil its doom !

The shadows of the convent-towers
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord :
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skaus.
 O—this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dask,
 To yonder shining ground ;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
 So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors :
 The flashes come and go ;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For my the Heavenly Bridegroom waits
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining seas—
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casque of
 men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.

Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail ;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed forms in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copes nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 'O just and faithful knight of God !
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
'And have you lost your heart?' she said;
'And are you married yet, Edward
Gray?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
'Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

'Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's will :
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea ;
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

'Cruel, cruel the words I said !
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle," I said,
"To trouble the heart of Edward Gray."

'There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, "Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !"

'Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
"Here lies the body of Ellen Adair :
And here the heart of Edward Gray !"

'Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree :
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

'Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward Gray !'

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL
MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUM head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port :
But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favour'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days :

I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
 The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
 And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
 My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
 Unboding critic-pen,
 Or that eternal want of pence,
 Which vexes public men,
 Who hold their hands to all, and cry
 For that which all deny them —
 Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
 And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
 Tho' fortune clip my wings,
 I will not cramp my heart, nor take
 Half-views of men and things.
 Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
 There must be stormy weather ;
 But for some true result of good
 All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes :
 If old things, there are new ;
 Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
 Yet glimpses of the true.
 Let ruffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
 We lack not rhymes and reasons,
 As on this whirligig of Time
 We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;
 With fair horizons bound :
 This whole wide earth of light and shade
 Comes out, a perfect round.
 High over roaring Temple-bar,
 And set in Heaven's third story,
 I look at all things as they are,
 But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest
 Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
 The pint, you brought me, was the best
 That ever came from pipes.

But tho' the port surpasses praise,
 My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
 Is there some magic in the place ?
 Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,
 No pint of white or red
 Had ever half the power to turn
 This wheel within my head,
 Which bears a season'd-brain about,
 Unsubject to confusion,
 Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
 Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
 With many kinsmen gay,
 Where long and largely we carouse
 As who shall say me nay :
 Each month, a birth-day coming on,
 We drink defying trouble,
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,
 And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
 Had relish fiery-new,
 Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
 As old as Waterloo ;
 Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,
 In musty bins and chambers,
 Had cast upon its crusty side
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
 She answer'd to my call,
 She changes with that mood or this,
 Is all-in-all to all :
 She lit the spark within my throat,
 To make my blood run quicker,
 Used all her fiery will, and smote
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
 The waiter's hands, that reach
 To each his perfect pint of stout,
 His proper chop to each.

He looks not like the common insect
That with the napkin dally ;
I think he came like Ganymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cook was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward in a flummie bag,
And cramm'd a plumper crop ;
Upon an apples (lunghill) stool,
Crow'd justier late and early,
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
Till in a court he saw
A something-pottle-bodied boy
That knuckled at the law :
Hestoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and good,
Flew over roof and casement :
His brothers of the weather stood
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spire,
And follow'd with acclaims,
A sign to many a staring shire
Came crowing over Thames.
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till where the street grows straiter,
One fall'd far ever at the door,
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
How out of place she makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks !
'Tis but a steward of the can,
One shade more plump than common ;
As just and mere a serving-man
As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down
Into the common day ?
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay ?

For, something daller than at first,
Nor wholly comfortable,
I sit, my empty glass reversed,
And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
I take myself to task ;
Lest of the fullness of my life
I leave an empty flask :
For I had hope, by something more,
To prove myself a poet :
But, while I plan and plan, my hair
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
Till they be gather'd up ;
The truth, that flies the flowing can,
Will haunt the vacant cup :
And others' follies teach us not,
Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
And most, of sterling worth, is what
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
We know not what we know,
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;
'Tis gone, and let it go.
'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipp'd
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of darken'd forms and fames.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy letters wait
Long since, and came no more ;
With peals of genial clamour sent
From many a tavern-door,
With twisted quirks and happy hits,
From misty men of letters ;
The tavern-hours of nighty wits—
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hence, when the Friar's goats and loins
Had yet their native glow ;
Nor yet the face of little books
Had made him talk for show ;

But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
 He dash'd his random speeches,
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
 Like all good things on earth !
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou last,
 At half thy real worth ?
 I hold it good, good things should pass :
 With time I will not quarrel :
 It is but yonder empty glass
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
 To which I most resort,
 I too must part : I hold thee dear
 For this good pint of port.
 For this, thou shalt from all things suck
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
 And where-so'er thou move, good luck
 Shall find her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
 The sphere thy fate allots :
 Thy latter days increased with pence
 Go down among the pots :
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
 In founts of hungry sinners,
 Old boxes, larded with the steam
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We eat, we fume, would shift our skins,
 Would quarrel with our lot ;
 Thy ring is, under polish'd tins,
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;
 To come and go, and come again,
 Returning like the pewit,
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
 The trifle with the crust.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
 The thick-set hazel dies :
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
 The corner of thine eyes :

Live long, nor feel in head or chest
 Our changeful equinoxes,
 Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
 Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
 To pace the gritted floor,
 And, laying down an unctuous lease
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;
 No carved cross-bones, the types of
 Death,
 Shall show thee past to Heaven :
 But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
 And clouds are highest up in air,
 Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
 To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
 Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
 They too will wed the morrow morn :
 God's blessing on the day !

'He does not love me for my birth,
 Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;
 He loves me for my own true worth,
 And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
 Said, 'Who was this that went from
 thee ?'

'It was my cousin,' said Lady Clare,
 'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd!' said Alice the
 nurse,

'That all comes round so just and fair :
 Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
 And you are not the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?'

Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so wild?'

'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,
'I speak the truth; you are my child.'

'The old Earl's daughter died at my breast:

I speak the truth, as I live by hand!
I nursed her like my own sweet child,
And you my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother,' she said, 'if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret for your life,
And all you here will be Lord Ronald's,
When you're man and wife.'

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,
'I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret all ye see.'
She said, 'Nay now — but I will know
If there be any truth in you.'

'Nay now, 'tis I will!' said Alice the nurse,
'The man will cleave unto his right,
'And he shall have it' the lady replied,
'For I should die tonight.'

'Yet give me that to wear meeting day
Now, my child, I can't fit those.
'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,
'So strange it seems to me.'

'Yet have a kiss for my mother's sake,
My mother dear, it shall be so.'

And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, as I go.'

She clod herself in a velvet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by night, and she went lay
down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had
brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
'O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?'

'If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a beggar born,' she said,
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'For I am young as you and in deed;
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'Yourwifely is hard to see!'

O and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail:
She look'd upon Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her mother's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merriment,
His titer'd and kind her where she
staid.

'If you be not the beggar born,
And I,' said he, 'I'll stand to that —'

'If you be not the beggar born,
And I,' said he, 'I'll stand to that —'
We two will wed no more my name,
And you shall live as Lady Clare.'

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as Hell I count his error.
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was : the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stem he was and rash ;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbour-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Bore a ship of France.
Then the Captain's colour heighten'd.
Joyful came his speech :
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
'Chase,' he said : the ship flew forward,
And the wood did blow ;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
And what they thought :

Mate with fuled arms they waited —
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thunder
Roaring out their doom ;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shat-
ter'd,
Bullets fell like rain ;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.
Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :
Every mother's son —
Down they dropt — no word was spoken —
Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,
Were their faces grim,
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.
Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie ;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,
' If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well.'

She replies, in accents fainter,
 'There is none I love like thee.'
 He is but a landscape painter,
 And a village maiden slow,
 He to lips, that foolishly flutter,
 Presses his without reproof;
 Leads her to the village alone,
 And they leave her father's roof.
 'I can make no marriage present:
 Little can I give my wife,
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life.'
 They by parks and lodges going
 See the lordly castles stand:
 Summer-woods, about them blowing,
 Made a murmur in the land.
 From deep thought himself he rouses,
 Says to her that loves him well,
 'Let us see these handsome houses
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'
 So she goes by him attend'd,
 Hears him lovingly converse,
 Sees whatever fair and splendid
 Lay betwixt his house and hers:
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
 Parks and orchard gardens great,
 And soft hours of lord and lady,
 From brightness and festivity.
 All he shows her makes him dearer:
 Evermore she comes to gaze
 On that castle growing nearer,
 Where they dwell will spend their
 days.
 O but she will love him only:
 He shall have a cheerful home;
 She will enter all *happily*,
 When beneath his roof they come.
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
 Till a journey she takes
 With armorial hunting, vanity,
 And beneath the gate she sees
 Sees a monster more majestic
 Than all those she saw before:

Many a gallant gay domestic
 Flow'd about her in the town.
 And they speak in gentle murmur,
 When they arrive to his hall,
 While he creeps with rousting noise,
 Landing on from hall to hall,
 And, while *new* she scowles fitfully,
 Nor the meaning soon divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 'All of this is mine and thine.'
 Here he lives in state and luxury,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the colour flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin:
 As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
 Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove:
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he kiss'd her and with love,
 So she stave against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank:
 Shaped her heart with woman's *manly*
 love
 To fill dulness of her rank:
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her well.
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and noon,
 With the burden of an issue:
 Time which she was not born:
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she *uttered*: 'O! the he
 Went *more* than the *happiest* pair,
 Which did win my heart from me!
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
 Fading slowly from his side:
 These two children first she bore,
 Then before her time she died.

Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Wall'd in, upon a pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 'Bring the dress, and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed.'
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Brought to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

THE VOYAGE.

We left behind the painted buoy
 That tosses at the harbour-mouth;
 And mostly there our hearts with joy
 A fast would bind to the South;
 How the waves every sight and sound
 On open main or winding shore!
 We know the merry world was round,
 And we might sail for evermore.

II.

We on broke the breeze against the brow,
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail;
 The Leary lay upon the prow,
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the
 gale.

The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
 As I swept behind; so quick the run,
 We left the good ship shake and reel,
 We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

III.

How oft we to the Sun retire,
 And burn the threshold of the night,
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!
 How oft the purple-skirted robe
 Of the Sun slowly downward drawn,
 As thro' the slumber of the globe
 A shadow sh'd into the dawn!

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
 Of waters lighten'd into view;
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
 Changed every moment as we flew.
 Far ran the naked moon across
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,
 Or flying shone, the silver boss
 Of her own halo's dusky shield;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
 We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we dove,
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep
 The muting rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
 brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine;
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark!
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
 And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight.

Her face was scarce a sunset,
 And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
 But each man murmur'd, ' O my Queen,
 I follow all I notice thee in.' "

IX.

And now we had her, now she gave us
 Like Fairy music of golden dulcino,
 Now nearer to the pearls she seem'd
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair.
 Now high as waves that billow'd
 Like Heavenly Utopia crown'd the
 sea.
 And now, the bloodless point revers'd,
 she bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him
 We pleas'd not—her vessel from pleas'd:
 He saw not far : his eyes were dim ;
 But soon he swore were all dissolved,
 ' A ship of fools,' he drink'd ' in spice,
 ' A ship of fools,' he smok'd and sup'd,
 And ever had one stormy night
 He lost his body, and on sea slept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was fain,
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
 We lov'd the glim of the world,
 The gaze of nature was not ours.
 For those would (to and fro) our gaze,
 But others were these that drive the
 sail
 Across the whirlwind's billow'd sea,
 And to and fro the keel's and
 gun's

XII.

Again to midday plumes we came,
 For still we follow'd where she led ;
 Now none so blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead,
 The third so lame or sick or dead,
 We follow that which she has led ;
 We know the many would be dead,
 And the many would be led.

THE LANCELOT AND QUEEN
 GUINEVERE.

A PASTORAL.

Light souls that halloo'd joy and pain,
 With tears and smiles from heaven's rain
 The golden Spring upon the plain
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

In crystal vapour everwhom
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd down,
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song ;
 Sometimes the throstle whistled strong ;
 Sometimes the sparrow, wheel'd along,
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong ;
 By grassy capes with daisy-awn
 He curves the following eye and
 And drooping chestnut-buds
 To spread into the perfect fan,
 Above the teeming ground.

Thus, in the bosom of the sun,
 So Lancelot and Queen Guinevere
 Kept thro' the covert of the green,
 With blissful treble rugg'd
 She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :
 A glow of green-guest all the
 Buckled with golden chain and
 A light green tuft of plume
 Crown'd in a golden ring.

Now at noon twilight lay,
 Now by stars tinkling
 In mosses mixt with
 Her team-white mule his pastern set
 And there, as the crown of the plain
 Than the white of the
 By night to every
 When all the glimmering
 With laughing, bold-

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid ;
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

From dawn, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver ;
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river ;
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

Her arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say ;
Fore-faeted came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stepped down,
'To meet and greet her on her way ;
'It is no wonder,' said the lord,
'She is more beautiful than day.'

As bright the moon in clouded skies,
So in her poor attire was seen ;
One pebbled her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and her wondrous mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been :
Cophetua sware a royal oath :—
'This beggar maid shall be my queen !'

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow ;
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go ;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.
Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst
not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry ;
But thou, go by.
Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest ;
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where
I lie ;
Go by, go by.

THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
 A black yew gleam'd the stagnant air,
 I peep'd athwart the chancel pore,
 And saw the altar cold and bare,
 A clug of lead was round my feet,
 A band of pale grass my brow:
 Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
 Before you lose my marriage vow.

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a litten song,
 That mock'd the wholesome human
 heart,
 And then we met in wrath and wrong,
 We met, but only meant to part.
 Full cold my greeting was and dry;
 She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
 I saw with half-unconscious eye
 She wore the colours I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
 With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
 Then raised her head with lips compress'd,
 And gave my letters back to me,
 And gave the trinkets and the rings,
 My gifts, when gifts of mine and thine
 A look'd a father on the things,
 Of her dear son, I look'd on thine.

IV.

She told me all her fears and told;
 I rag'd against the public bar;
 She talk'd as if her love were dead,
 But in my words were seeds of love,
 'No more of love; your sex is known:
 I never will be twice deceiv'd.
 Henceforth I trust the man alone,
 The woman cannot be believ'd.

V.

'Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—
 And women's stink'd and stony walls,

And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
 'Thro' you, my life will be account?
 I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
 I stood her breast with vague alarms—
 Like torrents from a mountain source,
 We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
 And sweet the vapour-braided blue,
 Low breezes fan'd the lalfry bars,
 As homeward by the church I strove,
 The very graves appear'd to smile,
 So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells;
 'Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,
 There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late:
 A youth came riding toward a palace-gate—
 He rode a horse with wings that would
 have flown,
 But that his heavy rider kept him down,
 And from the palace came a child of sin,
 And took him by the curls, and led him in,
 Where sat a company with heated wine,
 Expecting when a fountain should arise:
 A sleepy light upon their brows had light—
 As when the sun, a crescent of eclipses,
 Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and
 cape—
 Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
 shapes,
 By heaps of pearls, and lines of wine,
 and piles of rhyms.

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
 Gathering up from all the dross ground:
 Narrowing in to where they sat, and humm'd
 Low voluptuous music winding tremul'd,
 Wov'n in circles: they that heard it squ'd,
 Panted hand in hand with faces pale,

Swung through the air in low throes
replied :

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died ;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale ;
Till thronging in and in, to where they

waded,

As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong throop-sons treble throng'd
and palpated :

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the forest, willow, round :

Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grimaces,
Half-invisible to the view,

Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew :

Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-
tract,

That cut the region with high cliff and
lawn :

I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
The sun made himself an awful rose of
glory.

His golden rays, like a ching, fold by fold,
From the world's high fountains, slowly
and gently

A yellow fire, like a sun, from a cold,

Came floating on for many a month and
year.

Unheeded : and I thought I would have
spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it grew too
late :

But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine was
broken,

When that cold vapour touch'd the palace
gate,

And link'd ag ain. I saw within my head
A grey and gap-tooth'd man as lean as
death,

Who slowly rode to a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

'Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !

Here is custom come your way ;
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

'Bitter barmaid, waning fast !

See that sheets are on my bed ;
What ! the flower of life is past :
It is long before you wed.

'Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,
At the Dragon on the heath !

Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

'I am old, but let me drink ;

Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

'Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

'Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Check by jowl, and knee by knee :
What care I for any name ?
What for order or degree ?

- * Let my words flow up a peg :
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine !
 Call it Dionysus' thing of joy !
 What's to be thrust out thence or mine ?
- * Then shall not be saved by words :
 These have been & must be
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
 Every manworm, I and you !
- * Fill the cup, and fill the can—
 Have a rouse before the morn' :
 Every moment dies a man,
 Every moment one is born.
- * We are men of rain'd blood :
 Therefore comes it we are wise :
 Floods are we that love the mud,
 Rising to no fancy-dies.
- * Name and fame ! to fly sublime
 Thro' the courts, the camps, the schools,
 Is to be the ball of Time,
 Sanctified by the hands of fools.
- * Friendship !—to be two in one—
 Let the ranting liar pack !
 Well I know, when I am gone,
 How she mutters behind my back.
- * Virtue !—to be good and just—
 Every hour when asked well,
 Is a sign of warmer dust,
 Mix'd with rotting mother-of-ill.
- * O ! we have no will nor love
 Whiter than the best of life
 As the gnat, when his work
 Learning of his neighbor's wife.
- * Fill the bag, and fill the can :
 Have a rouse before the morn' :
 Every moment dies a man,
 Every moment one is born.
- * Drink, and let the parties pass :
 They are fill'd with folly-plenty,
 Rising, falling, like a wave,
 For deep know not what they mean.
- * He that asks for liberty
 Fears the tyrant's eyes' power :
 And the tyrant's cruel eye
 Feeds on the free man.
- * Fill the can, and fill two cups :
 All the windy ways of man
 Are but dust that rises up,
 And is lightly laid again.
- * Greet her with applause herself,
 Freedom, gaily doth she tread :
 In her right a civic wreath,
 In her left a human head.
- * No, I love not what is new :
 She is of an ancient breed,
 And I think we know the hue
 Of that cup given for bread.
- * Let her go ! her thing is done—
 Where the liberty soul'd man
 Then her summer sand she makes
 On the sand-beach of her own.
- * Drink to full lips that under
 Vision of a perfect Sun—
 Drink we, last, the public good,
 Frantic love and frantic fun.
- * Claim you now some wisdom-stress,
 Till thy flaming courage dies,
 And the glow-worm of the grave
 Illumes thy thy shadow-eyes.
- * Don't let him be loose thy tongue :
 Set thy heavy chains free,
 What a headache to the young
 Sorrow'd well be for him too.

'Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

'Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance ;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

'Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizen,
Hellow, leasars an' i' empty heavis !

'You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

'Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam—if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

'No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye—nor yet your lip :
All life is gone—so I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

'Lo ! God's likeness—the ground-plan—
Nasher modell'd, glazed, nor framed :
Bless us, thou rough sketch of man,
For too naked to be shamed !

'Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

'Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :

What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

'Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

V.

The voice grew faint : there came a further
change :

Once more uprose the mystic mountain-
range :

Below were men and horses pierced with
worms,

And slowly quickening into lower forms ;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of
dross,

Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd
with moss.

Then some one spake : 'Behold ! it was
a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore with
time.'

Another said : 'The crime of sense
became

The crime of malice, and is equal blame.'

And one : 'He had not wholly quench'd
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him sour.'

At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope'
'To which an answer peal'd from that high
land,

But in a tongue no man could understand ;
And on the glimmering limit far with-
drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

TO —,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND
LETTERS

'I used to be that noisy rascal';
Chatterbox's remark.

You might have won the Poet's name,
 If such be worth the winning now,
 And gain'd a laurel for your brow
 Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;
 But you have made the wiser choice,
 A life that moves to gracious strife—
 Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
 A deafful life, a silent voice :
 And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
 Of those that wear the Poet's crown :
 Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
 Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.
 For now the Poet cannot die,
 Nor leave his music as of old,
 But round him ere he scarce be cold
 Begins the surmial and the cry :
 ' Disclaim the faults he would not show :
 Break lock and seal : betray the trust :
 Keep nothing sacred : 'tis his just
 The many-headed base should know,
 All shrouded ! for he did but sing
 A song that pleased us from its worth ;
 No public life was his on earth,
 No knave's'd accusation by, nor king.
 He gave the people of his land ;
 His name he kept, he had his grave,
 My Shakespeare's grave on slow and
 knave
 Who will not let his ashes rest !
 Who make it more more sweet to be
 The little life of bank and briar,
 The bird that pipes his lone desire
 And then unfolds a thin grey hair.

Than he that warbles long and loud
 And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
 For whom the eastern soldier waits
 To rear his breast before the sword !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN
GREECE.

It : VERTAN was (Hercules, or some) tells
 Of water, sheets of summer glass,
 The long divine Peneian pass,
 The vast Akrokeraurian walls,
 Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
 With such a pencil, such a pen,
 You shadow forth to distant men,
 I read and felt that I was there :
 And trust me while I turn'd the page,
 And track'd you still on classic ground,
 I grew in gladness till I found
 My spirits in the golden age,
 For me the forest ever pour'd
 And glisten'd—down and there alone
 The immortal Gods at random
 thrown
 By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads pour'd
 A glimmering shoulder under gloom
 Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
 The silver lily heaved and fell ;
 And many a Gêpe was in its bloom
 From him that on the mountain led
 By dancing rivulets fed his flock,
 To him who on the rocks
 And flow'd by the morning sea.

Be Lark, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O sea !
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the sailor's boy,
That he should sail his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
And the gentle and beautiful day
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

He pass'd by the town and out of the
When the years have

A light wind blow from the gates of the
sun,
And waves of shadow went over the
wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her
cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on
his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, 'I have sung
many songs,
But never a one so gay.
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have

ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a
chasm;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow
sand;
By good, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster; then a moulder'd church; and
higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd
mill;
And high to heaven loomed in a gray town
With Dutch lanterns; and a hazelwood
By green water, lapped, Benches
Given to the children of the coast.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
Three children of threehouses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hurl'd coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-
nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-
drawn;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow passage in beneath the glint ;
In this the children play'd at keeping
hours.

Enoch was last Sunday, Philip the next,
While Annie's dist was mistress : but at
times

Enoch would hold possession for a week.
"This is my home and this my little wife,"
"Mine too," said Philip, "care and love
abound."

When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch strove to
ma-

was master : then would Philip, his blue
eye

All flooded with the helpless wrath of
tears,

Shriek out, "I hate you, Enoch," and at
this

The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood
past,

And the new warmth of life's ascending
sun

Work'd by either, either fixt his heart
To that one girl, and Enoch spoke his
love.

But Philip loved in silence ; and the girl
Saw'd kinder into Philip than to him ;
For she loved Enoch : O'er she knew it
not.

And would I did it long ! Enoch said
A purpose extreme before his eyes,
To board all veils in the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make a
home.

For Annie, too, he prosper'd (but at last
A better or a better measure,

A careful in peril, did not breathe
For longest change that broken-boards
own.

That Enoch. (Lifted on his keelson) to
your

On board a new command, and read
himself

Full sailor ; and he twice had pluck'd
life

From the dread swarmed (the bows-stream-
ing seas)

And all men look'd upon him favourably ;
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth
May

He purchased his own boat, and made a
home

For Annie, now and not like, halfway to
The narrow street that clamber'd toward
the mill.

Then, on a golden set-our-evening,
The younger people making holiday,
With log and mass and ballad, great and
small,

Went sitting in the seats : Philip stay'd
(His father lying still, and nursing him)
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began

To number toward the hollow, saw the
pain,

Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large gray eye and weather-beaten
face

All hidden by a still and sacred dew.
That lay'd it on an altar : Philip look'd
And in the vapour felt a cool light bloom,
Then, as their feet drew together,
ground,

And slip aside, and like a wounded life
A eye down into the hollow of the wood ;
There, while the one was laid in merry
trailing,

His low dark brow rising, and too and
poor

Enoch's & Annie's fingers in his hair.

So these were wed, and merrily rang
the bells,
And merrily ran the years, seven happy
years,
Seven happy years of health and com-
petence,

And mutual love and honourable toil ;
With children ; first a daughter. In him
woke,

With his first babe's first cry, the noble
wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers ; a wish re-

When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitudes,

While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward ; for in truth
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-

In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter
gales,

Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's minister-
ing.

Then came a change, as all things
human change.

Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven : thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
And once when there, and clambering on
a mast

In harbour, by mischance he slept and fell :
A limb was broken when they lifted him ;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one :
Another hand crept too across his trade

Taking her bread and theirs : and on him
fell,

Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her, he loved, a beggar : then he
pray'd

'Save them from this, whatever comes to
me.'

And while he pray'd, the master of that
ship

Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-
chance,

Came, for he knew the man and valued
him,

Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he
go ?

There yet were many weeks before she
sail'd,

Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch
have the place ?

And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance
appear'd

No graver than as when some little cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the offing : yet the
wife —

When he was gone — the children — what
to do ?

Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his
plans ;

To sell the boat — and yet he loved her
well —

How many a rough sea had he weather'd
in her !

He knew her, as a horseman knows his
horse —

And yet to sell her—then with what she
brought

Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in
trade

With all that women needed on their
travels—

So might she keep the house while he
was gone.

Should he not trade himself out yonder?
go

The voyage were than once? yet twice
or three—

As oft as needed—last, returning rich,
Become the master of a larger craft,

With fuller profits lead an easier life,
Have all his pretty young ones educated.

And possess his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all:
Then moving homeward came on Annie
pale,

Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,

And laid the feeble infant in his arms;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his
limbs,

Appointed his weight and kind of father-
like,

But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring
had gone

Her finger, Annie fought against his will:
Not not with brawling opposition she,

But manifold entreaties, many a tear,
Many a sad kiss by day by night, morn'd

(Sure that all evil would come out of it)
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared

For her or his dear children, not to go.
He not for his own self caring for her,

Her and her children, let her plead in vain;
So groaning held his word, and went his time.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-
fitted,

Bought Annie goods and stores, and set
his hand

To fit their little streetward sitting-room
With shelf and corner for the goods and
stores.

So all day long till Enoch's last at home,
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and
awl.

Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to
hear.

Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd
and rang,

Till this was ended, and his careful
hand.

The space was narrow,—having order'd all
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs
Her blossom or her seedling, pruned:

and he,

Who needs would work for Annie to the
last,

Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of fare-
well

Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
Save as his Annie's, were a language to
him.

Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
Where God's-man he saw with himself—
God,

Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes.
Whatever came to him: and then he said

'Annie, this voyage by the grace of God
Will bring her weather yet to all of us.
Keep her from harm, and a clear fire for me.

For I'll be laid, my girl, before you
know it.'

Then lightly rocking baby's cradle 'and
to,

This pretty, puny, weakly little one,

‘I go— for I love him all the better for it—
 Can I see him, he shall sit upon my knees
 And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
 And make him merry, when I come
 Home again.’

‘Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I go.’

‘Him musing on thus hopefully—she
 Heard.’

‘Annie almost hoped herself; but when he
 Turn’d’

‘The current of his talk to gayer things—
 In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
 On providence and trust in Heaven, she
 Heard.’

‘From the log-book he took; as the village
 Girl’

‘Wonders for another memento the
 Spring.’

‘Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
 It overflow’d not hears, and lets it overflow.’

‘At length she spoke: ‘O Enoch, you
 Are wise;’

‘And ye for all your wisdom well know, I
 Shall look upon your face no more.’

‘Well I do,’ said Enoch, ‘I shall look
 On you.’

‘Cross the water I sail in passenger—
 (One round the day) get you a seaward
 Glimpse.’

‘I’ll gaze on my face, and laugh at all your
 Frowns.’

‘And when the best of those last moments
 Came,

‘Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
 Look to the babes, and till I come again
 Keep every thing tight and trim, for I must go.
 And let me know for me; or if you fear
 Cast all your cares on God; that anchor
 Holds.’

‘He sat yonder in those uttermost
 Parts of the morning? if I flee to these
 Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
 The sea is His: He made it.’

Enoch rose,

Cast his strong arms about his drooping
 wife,

And kiss’d his wonder-stricken little ones;
 But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
 After a night of feverous wakefulness,
 When Annie would have raised him
 Enoch said

‘Wake him not; let him sleep; how
 Should the child

Remember this?’ and kiss’d him in his
 cot.

But Annie from her baby’s forehead clipt
 A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept
 Till all his future; but now hastily
 caught

His bundle, waved his hand, and went
 his way.

She when the day, that Enoch
 mention’d, came,

Borrow’d a glass, but all in vain: perhaps
 She could not fix the glass to suit her eye;
 Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous;
 She saw him not: and while he stood on
 deck

Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev’n to the last dip of the vanishing sail
 She watch’d it, and departed weeping for
 him;

Then, tho’ she mourn’d his absence as his
 grave,

Set her sad will no less to chime with his,
 But thro’ not in her trade, not being bred
 To harter, nor compensating the want
 By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
 Nor asking overmuch and taking less,

And still *forsooting* 'what would Enoch say?'

For more than *years*, in days of difficulty
And pressure, had she sold her wares for
loss.

Than what she gave in buying what she
sold :

She fall'd and *scullion'd* knowing it ; and
thus,

Expectant of that news which never came,
Gall'd for her own scanty sustenance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born
and grew

Vet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
With all a mother's care : nevertheless,

Whether her business often call'd her from
it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed most,
Or means to pay the voice who best could
tell

What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,
After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried
it,

Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her
presence

(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon
her),

Smote him, as having kept aloof so long,
'Surely,' said Philip, 'I may see her now.

May be some little comfort ;' therefore
went,

Fast thro' the solitary room in front,
Paus'd for a moment at an inner door,

Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Enter'd ; but Annie, seated with her grief,

Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,

But turn'd her own toward the wall and
wept.

Then Philip standing up said falteringly
'Annie, I came to ask a favour of you.'

He spake ; the passion in her mean'd
reply

'Favour from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am !' half abash'd him ; yet unask'd,

His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to her :

'I came to speak to you of what he
wish'd,

Enoch, your husband : I have ever said
You chose the best among us—a strong
man :

For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.

And wherefore did he go this weary way,
And leave you lonely ? not to see the
world—

For pleasure?—nay, but for the where-
withal

To give his babes a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or yours : that was
his wish.

And if he come again, vext will he be
To find the precious morning hours were
lost.

And it would vex him even in his grave,
If he could know his babes were running
wild

Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,
now—

Have we not known each other all our
lives ?

I do beseech you by the love you bear
Him and his children not to say me nay—

For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
Why then he shall repay me—if you will,

Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
Now let me put the boy and girl to school :

This is the favour that I came to ask.'

Then Annie with her brows against the
 wall
 Answer'd 'I cannot look you in the face ;
 I seem so foolish and so broken down.
 When you came in my sorrow broke me
 down ;
 And now I think your kindness breaks
 me down ;
 But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on me :
 He will repay you : money can be repaid ;
 Not kindness such as yours.'

And Philip ask'd
 'Then you will let me, Annie?'

There she turn'd,
 She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon
 him,
 And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
 Then calling down a blessing on his head
 Caught at his hand, and wrung it passion-
 ately,
 And past into the little garth beyond.
 So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to
 school,
 And bought them needful books, and
 every way,
 Like one who does his duty by his own,
 Made himself theirs ; and tho' for Annie's
 sake,
 Fearing the lazy gossip of the poor,
 He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
 And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
 Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and
 fruit,
 The late and early roses from his wall,
 Or come from the down, and now and
 then,
 With some pretext of business in the mind
 To save the offence of charitable, flour
 From his mill mill that whistled on the
 wheel.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's
 mind :
 Scarce could the woman when he came
 upon her,
 Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
 Light on a broken word to thank him with.
 But Philip was her children's all-in-all ;
 From distant corners of the street they ran
 To greet his hearty welcome heartily ;
 Lords of his house and of his mill were
 they :
 Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
 Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with
 him
 And call'd him Father Philip. Philip
 gain'd
 As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to them
 Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
 Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
 Down at the far end of an avenue,
 Going we know not where : and so ten
 years,
 Since Enoch left his hearth and native
 land,
 Fled forward, and no news of Enoch
 came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children
 long'd
 To go with others, nutting to the wood,
 And Annie would go with them ; then
 they begg'd
 For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too :
 Him, like the working bee in blossom-
 dust,
 Blanch'd with his mill, they found ; and
 saying to him
 'Come with us Father Philip' he denied ;
 But when the children pluck'd at him to go,
 He laugh'd, and yielded readily to their
 wish,
 For was not Annie with them ? and they
 went.

But after scaling half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
Lays
To faster toward the hollow, all her force
Fell'd her; and sighing, 'Let me rest!' she
said;
So Philip moved with her well content;
While all the younger ones with jubiliant
cries
Broke from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a
clump
To the bottom, and dispersed, and here
or broke
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here are there, about the
wood!

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
His presence, and remember'd one dark
hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded
bird
His cry (into the distance) at last heald,
Lifting his banner, bostred, 'Listen,
Annie,
How many trees are down young in the
wood,
Tired, Annie?' for she did not speak a
word,
'Tired?' but her face had fall'n upon her
hand;
At which, as with a kind of agony in him,
'The ship was lost,' he said, 'the ship
was lost;
No more of that! why should you kill
yourself
And make them orphans quite?' And
Annie said
'I thought not of it, then—I know not
why—
Their voices make me feel so solitary.'

Then Philip, coming somewhat closer
spoke,
'Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first came
there,
I know that it will not go lost. O Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
That he who left you ten long years ago
Should still be living; well then—let me
speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting help:
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless—they say that women are so
quick—
Perhaps you know what I would have
you know—
I wish you for my wife. I fain would
prove
A father to your children: I do think
They love me as a father: I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine
own:
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad unnumber'd years,
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon it:
For I am well-to-do—and have, no more,
No children, save my care for you and
yours:
And we have known each other all our
lives,
And I have loved you longer than you
know.'

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she
spoke:
'You have been a goodly good support
our lives,
God bless you for it, thank reward you for
it,
Philip, with something happier than my-
self.

Can one love twice? can you be ever
loved

As Enoch was? what is it that you ask?

'I am content' he answer'd 'to be loved

A little after Enoch.' 'O' she cried,

Scared as it were, 'dear Philip, wait a
while:

If Enoch comes— but Enoch will not
come—

Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:

Surely I shall be wiser in a year:

O wait a little!' Philip sadly said

'Annie, as I have waited all my life

I will may wait a little.' 'Nay' she
cried

'I am bound: you have my promise—in
a year:

Will you not bide your year as I bide
mine?'

And Philip answer'd 'I will bide my
year.'

Here both were mute, till Philip glanc-
ing up

Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day

Pass from the Danish barrow overhead;

Then fearing night and chill for Annie,
rose

And sent his voice beneath him thro' the
wood.

Up came the children laden with their
spoil;

Then all descended to the port, and there
At Annie's door he paused and gave his
hand,

Saying gently 'Annie, when I spoke to
you,

That was your hour of weakness. I was
wrong,

I am always bound to you, but you are
free.'

Then Annie weeping answer'd 'I am
bound.'

She spoke; and in one moment as it
were,

While yet she went about her household
ways,

Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,
That he had loved her longer than she
knew,

That autumn into autumn flash'd again,
And there he stood once more before her
face,

Claiming her promise. 'Is it a year?'
she ask'd.

'Yes, if the nuts' he said 'be ripe again:
Come out and see.' But she—she put
him off—

So much to look to—such a change—a
month—

'Give her a month—she knew that she was
bound—

A month—no more. Then Philip with
his eyes

Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,

'Take your own time, Annie, take your
own time.'

And Annie could have wept for pity of
him;

And yet she held him on delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,
Till half-another year had slept away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but trifle
with her;

Some that she but held off to draw him on;
And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,
As simple folk that knew not their own
minds,

And one, in whom all evil fancies clung
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly

Would hint at worse in either. Her own
son

Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish ;
But evermore the daughter prest upon her
To wed the man so dear to all of them
And lift the household out of poverty ;
And Philip's rosy face contracting grew
' Careworn and wan ; and all these things
fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray'd for a sign ' my Enoch is he gone ?'
Then compass'd round by the blind wall
of night
Look'd not the expectant terror of her
heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
' Under the palm-tree.' That was nothing
to her :

No meaning there : she closed the Book
and slept :

When lo ! her Enoch sitting on a height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun :
' He is gone,' she thought, ' he is happy,
he is singing

Hosanna in the highest : yonder shines
The Sun of Righteousness, and these be
palms

Whereof the happy people strowing cried
' Hosanna in the highest !' Here she
woke,

Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to
him

' There is no reason why we should not
wed.'

' Then for God's sake, ' he answer'd, ' both
our sakes,

So you will wed me, let it be at once.'

So those were wed and merrily rang the
bells,

Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.

A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
She knew not whence ; a whisper on her
ear,

She knew not what ; nor loved she to be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone,

What ail'd her then, that ere she enter'd,
often

Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
Fearing to enter : Philip thought he knew :
Such doubts and fears were common to
her state,

Being with child : but when her child was
born,

Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
Then the new mother came about her
heart,

Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch ? prosperously
sail'd

The ship ' Good Fortune,' tho' at setting
forth

The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,
shook

And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unwept
She slept across the summer of the world,

Then after a long tumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,

She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually

And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and
bought

Quantities of a the market of those
times,

A golden *Angon*, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first
 indeed!
 Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
 Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head
 Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her
 bows :
 Then follow'd calms, and then winds
 variable,
 Then baffling, a long course of them ; and
 last
 Storm, such as drove her under moonless
 heavens
 Till hard upon the cry of ' breakers ' came
 The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
 But Enoch and two others. Half the
 night,
 Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken
 spars,
 These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
 Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
 Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing
 roots ;
 Nor save for pity was it hard to take
 The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
 There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
 They built, and thatch'd with leaves of
 palm, a hut,
 Half hut, half native cavern. So the
 three,
 Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
 Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more than
 boy,
 Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and
 wreck,
 Lay lingering out a five-years' death-in-
 life.
 They could not leave him. After he was
 gone,
 The two remaining found a fallen stem ;

And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
 Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
 Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.
 In those two deaths he read God's warn-
 ing ' wait.'

The mountain wooded to the peak, the
 lawns
 And winding glades high up like ways to
 Heaven,
 The slender coco's drooping crown of
 plumes,
 The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
 The lustre of the long convolvuluses
 That coil'd around the stately stems, and
 ran
 Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
 And glories of the broad belt of the world,
 All these he saw ; but what he fain had
 seen
 He could not see, the kindly human face,
 Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
 The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
 The league-long roller thundering on the
 reef,
 The moving whisper of huge trees that
 branch'd
 And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
 Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
 As down the shore he ranged, or all day
 long
 Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
 A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail :
 No sail from day to day, but every day
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
 Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;
 The blaze upon his island overhead ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;
 Then the great stars that globed them-
 selves in Heaven,
 The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
 ' The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to
 watch,
 Seem'd, the golden hair'd or hair'd pursued,
 A phantom made of many phantasms
 moved
 Before him haunting him, or he himself
 Moved haunting people, things and places,
 known
 For in a darker life beyond the door:
 The babes, their babble, Annie, the small
 house,
 The climbing street, the mill, the leafy
 lanes,
 The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,
 The horse he drove, the brass he sold, the
 chill
 November dawns and dewy-glooming
 dawns,
 The gentle shower, the smell of dying
 leaves,
 And the low moan of London-courer's choir.

Once like wise, in the ringing of his ears,
 That faintly, merrily—far and far away—
 He heard the pealing of his parish bells;
 Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started
 (35)
 stumbling, and when the tumultuous
 joyful din
 Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart
 Spoken with That, which being every-
 where
 Laid down, who speak with Him, seem
 all alone,
 Surely the man had died of sadness.

Thus over Enoch's misery uttering loud
 The sunny and rainy seasons came and
 went
 Year after year. His hopes rose, his own,
 And pace the sacred old familiar fields,
 Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely
 (40)

Came suddenly to an end. A storm (41)
 (She waded water) blown by falling
 winds,
 Like the Great Fortune, from a summer
 course,
 Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where
 she lay:
 For since the man had come or early dawn
 Across a break on the mist-wreathen tide
 The silent water slipping from the hills,
 They sent a crew that landing burst away
 In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the
 shores
 With clamour. Downward from the
 mountain gorge
 Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded solitary,
 Brown, looking hardly human, strangely
 clad,
 Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it
 seem'd,
 With inarticulate rage, and making signs
 They knew not what: and yet he led the
 way
 To where the rivulets of sweet water ran;
 And ever as he mumbled with lip-murmur,
 And heard them talking, his long-bounden
 tongue
 Was (42) (43), all he made them under-
 stand:
 Whom, when their could were fill'd they
 took (44):
 And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
 Scarce-ov'rlit at first but mounted more,
 Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it:
 And clothes they gave him and free pas-
 sage home:
 But all his world among the rest and
 (45)
 His relatives from him. None of these
 Came from his country, or could answer
 him,
 If (46) (47), might of what he cared to
 know.

And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but ever-
more

His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-
breath

Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:
And that same morning officers and men
Laid a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him i. :
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Ev'n in that harbour whence he sail'd
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward—home—what home? had
he a home?

His home, he walk'd. Bright was that
afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either
chasm,

Where either haven open'd on the deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world
in gray;

Cut off the length of highway on before,
And left but narrow breadth to left and
right

Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.
On the nigh-naked tree the robin piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it
down:

Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the
gloom:

Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light
Flared on him, and he came upon the
place.

Then down the long street having slowly
told,

His heart foreshadowing all calamity,

His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the
home

Where Annie lived and loved him, and
his babes

In those far-off seven happy years were
born;

But finding neither light nor murmur there
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle)
crept

Still downward thinking ' dead or dead to
me !'

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he
went,

Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
A front of timber-crost antiquity,
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
He thought it must have gone; but he
was gone

Who kept it; and his widow Miriam
Lane,

With daily-dwindling profits held the
house;

A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Stiller, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garru-
lous,

Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so
bow'd,

So broken—all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the
birth

Of Philip's child: and o'er his counten-
ance

No shadow past, nor motion: any one,
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale

Less than the teller : only when she closed
 ' Enoch, poor man, was cast away and
 lost.'

He, slaking his gray head pathetically,
 Repressed murmuring 'cast away and lost :'
 Again in deeper inward whispers 'lost !'

For Enoch yearn'd to see her face again :
 ' If I might look on her sweet face again
 And know that she is happy.' So the
 thought
 Haunted and harass'd him, and shov'd him
 forth.

At evening when the dull November day
 Was growing duller twilight, to the hill
 There he sat down gazing on all below ;
 There did a thousand memories roll upon
 him,

Unpeakable for sadness. By and by
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures
 The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
 Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the
 street.

The latest house to landward ; but behind,
 With one small gate that open'd on the
 wall.

It fronted a little garden square and
 wall'd.

And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
 A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it :
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and
 stole

Up by the wall, behind the yew ; and
 thence

That which he better might have shunn'd,
 if griefs

Like his have worn or better, Enoch
 saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd
 board

Sparkled and shone ; so genial was the
 hearth :

And on the right hand of the hearth he
 saw

Philip, the slightest suitor of old times,
 Stout, rosy, with his knee across his
 knees ;

And o'er her second father stoop'd a girl,
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
 Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted
 hand

Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
 To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy
 arms,

Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they
 laugh'd :

And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
 The mother glancing often toward her
 babe,

But turning now and then to speak with
 him,

Her son, who stood beside her tall and
 strong,

And saying that which pleased him, for
 he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life
 beheld

His wife, his wife no more, and saw the
 babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,
 And all the warmth, the peace, the happi-
 ness,

And his own children tall and beautiful,
 And him, that other, reigning in his place,
 Lord of his rights and of his children's
 love,—

Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him
 all,

Because things seen are mightier than
 things heard,

Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch,
and fear'd

To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
Which in one moment, like the blast of
death,

Would shatter all the happiness of the
hearth.

He then first turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate under-
foot,

And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be
found,

Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Hefted his, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that
his knees

Were fixed, — so that falling prone he dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd,

'Too hard to bear! why did they take
me thence?

O God! Almighty, blessed Saviour. Then
That did'st uphold me on my lonely isle.
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her peace.
My children too! must I not speak to
them?

They know me not. I should betray
myself.

Never! No Father! Use for me — the girl
no like her mother, and the boy, my son.

These speech and thought and nature
faded a little,

And he lay down; but when he rose
and pass'd

Back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he
went

Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
'Not to tell her, never to let her know.'

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore
Prayer from a living source within the
will,

And beating up thro' all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
Kept him a living soul. 'This miller's
wife'

He said to Miriam 'that you spoke about,
Has she no fear that her first husband
lives?'

'Ay, ay, poor soul!' said Miriam, 'fear
enow!

If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
Why, that would be her comfort;' and he
thought

'After the Lord has call'd me she shall
know,

I wait His time,' and Enoch set himself,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or
help'd

At lading and unlading the tall barks,
That brought the stinted commerce of
those days;

Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:
Yet since he did but labour for himself,
Work without hope, there was not life in it
Whereby the man could live; and as the
year

Roll'd itself round again to meet the day
When Enoch had return'd, a languor came
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do no
more,

But kept the house, his place, as I had bid
him.

And I watch'd her his weakness cheerfully,
For now no ghastlier than this strangled
wreck

See thro' the gray shrou of a living wraith
The best that e'er the Jews of life
approach

To save the life impair'd of, than he saw
Death blossoming on him, and the chosen of all.

For thus, that slaving dream'd a kind-
ler hope

On Enoch thinking 'neath I am gone,

Then may she learn I lov'd her to the last,¹

He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said

'Woman, I have a secret—only sweet,

Before I tell you—swear upon this book

Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.'

'I swear,' clamour'd the good woman, 'hear
him talk !

I warrant, man, that we shall bring you
round.'

'Swear' said Enoch, solemnly 'on this
book.'

And on the book, half-lighted, Miriam
swore.

Then Enoch rising, his gray eyes upon her,

'Did you know Enoch Arden of this
town ?'

'Know him ?' she said 'I know him far
away.

Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the
street ;

Held his head high, and cared for no man,
he.'

Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her ;

'His head is low, and no man cares for him.

I think I have not those days come to live ;

I am the man.' At which the woman gave

A half-mournful, half-hysterical cry.

'You Enoch, you I say—sure he was a
fine

fighter than you be.' Enoch said again

'My God has bow'd me down to what I
am ;

My grief and outrage have broken me ;

Now (if I dare, know you that I am he

Who married) but that name has twice
been changed.

I married her who married Philip Hoop,

Sir, listen.' Then he told her of his
voyage,

His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,

His gazing in on Annie, his 1000000.

And how he kept it. As the woman
heard,

Fast flow'd the current of her gray tears.

While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly

To rush abroad all round the little haven,

Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his wife ;

But awed and promise-bounded she for-
bore,

Saying only ' See your bairns before you
go !

Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden, ' and soon

Enger to bring them down, for Enoch had

A moment better word, but thro' the

'Woman, disturb me not now at the last,

But let me hold my purpose till I die.

So down again ; mark me and understand,

While I have power to speak. I charge
you now.

What you shall see her, tell her that I die'

Blessing her, praying for her, loving her ;

Save for the bar between us, loving her

As when she bid her hold her to my room.

And tell my daughter Anne, when I see

So like her mother, that my heart break

Was spent in blessing her and praying for
her.

And tell my son that I died blessing him.

And say to Philip that I blest him too ;

He never must as any thing be good.

But if my children care to see me dead,

Who hardly knew me living, let them
 come,
 I am their father ; but she must not come,
 For my dead face would vex her after-life.
 And now there is but one of all my blood
 Who will embrace me in the world-to-be :
 This hair is his : she cut it off and gave it,
 And I have borne it with me all these
 years,
 And thought to bear it with me to my
 grave ;
 But now my mind is changed, for I shall
 see him,
 My babe in bliss : wherefore when I am
 gone,
 Take, give her this, for it may comfort
 her :
 It will moreover be a token to her,
 That I am he.'

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane
 Made such a voluble answer promising all,
 That once again he roll'd his eyes upon
 her
 Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
 She promised.

Then the third night after this,
 While Enoch slumber'd motionless and
 pale,
 And Miriam watch'd and dozed at
 intervals,
 There came so loud a calling of the sea,
 That all the houses in the haven rang.
 He woke, he rose, he spread his arms
 abroad
 Crying with a loud voice 'A sail ! a sail !
 I am saved ;' and so fell back and spoke
 no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
 And when they buried him the little port
 Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to the
 East
 And he for Italy—too late—too late :
 One whom the strong sons of the world
 despise ;
 For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and
 share,
 And mellow metres more than cent for
 cent ;
 Nor could he understand how money
 breeds,
 Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself
 could make
 The thing that is not as the thing that
 is.
 O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks we
 say,
 Of those that held their heads above the
 crowd,
 They flourish'd then or then ; but life in
 him
 Could scarce be said to flourish, only
 touch'd
 On such a time as goes before the leaf,
 When all the wood stands in a mist of
 green,
 And nothing perfect : yet the brook he
 loved,
 For which, in branding summers of
 Bengal,
 Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry
 air
 I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
 Prattling the primrose fancies of the
 boy,
 To me that loved him ; for 'O brook,' he
 says,
 'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his
 rhyme,
 'Whence come you?' and the brook, why
 not? replies.

I issue from basins of out and burn,
I make a sudden start,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To water daisy-valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorns, a hedge-row,
And half a hundred bridges.

I'll meet by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For man may come and man may go,
But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite
worn out,

Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley
bridge,

It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and
river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy forest set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For man may come and man may go,
But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook
or bird;

Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-blow'd grigs that heap in summer
grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,
And here and there a honey-drone
Upon me, as I travel,
With many a silvery water-break
Above the golden gravel,

And show them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For man may come and man may go,
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one
child!

A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not
coarse;

Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good
turn,

Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back—the
week

Before I parted with poor Edmund; cross
By that old bridge which, half in ruins
then,

Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—cross,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The
gate,

Half-parted from a weak and scolding
hinge,

Stuck; and he clamour'd from a cham-
berment, "Run"

To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran: she
moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine
blossoms,

A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, I flushing for a boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment than
sense

Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
 Who dabbled in the fount of fictive
 tears,
 And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philan-
 thropies.
 Divorce the Feeling from her mate the
 Deed.

"She told me. She and James had
 quarrell'd. Why?
 What cause of quarrel? None, she said,
 a pause;
 James had no cause; but when I prest the
 cause,
 I learnt that James had flickering jea-
 lousies
 Which anger'd her. Whom anger'd James?
 I said.

But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from
 mine,
 And stretching with her slender joints
 fine
 Some figure like a wizard pentagram
 On garden gravel, let my query pass
 Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
 If James were coming. "Coming every
 day,"

She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
 But evermore her father came across
 With some long-winded tale, and broke
 him short;
 And James departed vex'd with him and
 her."
 How could I help her? "Would I was
 it wrong?"

(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
 Of sweet seventeen subdu'd me on the
 grass,
 "O would I took ten minutes for one hour,
 For one half-hour, and let him talk to
 me!
 And were I able to speak, I would have
 done
 it."

Made tower but, like a wader in the surf,
 Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-
 sweet.

"O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
 For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
 To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
 He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling
 lanes
 Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
 He praised his land, his horses, his ma-
 chines;
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his
 hogs, his dogs;
 He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-
 hens;
 His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
 Approved him, bowing at their own de-
 serts:
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat he
 took
 Her blind and shuddering puppies, nam-
 ing each,
 And naming those, his friends, for whom
 they were:
 Then crost the common into Darnley
 chase
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and
 fern
 Tinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
 "That was the four-year-old I sold the
 Squire."
 And there he told a long long-winded tale
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at
 grass,
 And how it was the thing his daughter
 wish'd,
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
 To learn the price, and what the price he
 ask'd,
 And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,

But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;

He gave them leave; and five days after that

He met the bailiff at the Golden Plover,
Who then and there had offer'd something more;

But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;

He knew the man; the man would fetch the price;

He gave them leave; and how by chance at last

(It might be May or April, he forgets,

The last of April or the first of May)

He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,

And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,

Until they stopt a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of
heaven, he,

Yours fellow, could he help it? recom-
mend)

And you (do) all the coltish chronicle,
With Will, Black Hen, Tooty, Duffly,
Lester, Wren, Rose, Balthazar, the
Dye.

Arthur, the Postmaster, and the good
Till now (the) corner, I know,

And with me Philip, riding still; and so
We went our footstools from the falling-
sun.

And following our own shadow's form so
long

As when they kiss'd us from Philip's
door,

Arrived, and found the set of seven
waiting

Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things
went

(And by hand and grace gone,

I stole by hand and grace,

I took the most honest man's

Time gave for longer love,

I left, I took, I gave, I gave,

Among my shining machine,

I took the most honest man's

And set me smiling down,

I never more more and grace,

Is hardly with grace,

I sing by my hand and

I later read my own

And our own love and flow

To join the brimming river,

For men may come and men may go,

But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and those
are gone,

All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund,
sleeps,

Not by the well-known stream and rustic
spire,

But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome

Of Brunelleschi; there, a quiet, and
he,

Thus Philip, of all his words, some of
words

Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:

I scraped the lichen from it, Katie walk'd
by the long way to Westminster

For all, and both, her hand to other men,

And brother in common names. All
are gone.

So Laurence-Aylmer, seated in a high
In the long hedge and piling to his mind
Old words of rhyme, and having his the
book

A passed hand in middle age follows,

Mind, and was sure. On a sudden he
was dead

Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile ladywood-bills and busy
rogs;

And he look'd up. There stood a maiden
 near,
 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he
 stared
 On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
 shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit with-
 in:
 Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from
 the farm?'
 'Yes' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little:
 pardon me;
 What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That
 were strange.
 What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!'
 'That is my name.'
 'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-
 perplext,
 That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd
 till he
 Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his
 dream.
 Then looking at her; 'Too happy, fresh
 and fair,
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best
 bloom,
 To be the ghost of one who bore your
 name
 About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie,
 'we came back.

We bought the farm we tenanted before.
 Am I so like her? so they said on board.
 Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
 My mother, as it seems you did, the days
 That most she loves to talk of, come with
 me.

My brother James is in the harvest-field:
 But she—you will be welcome—O, come
 in!

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded dust,
 our pride
 Looks only for a moment whole and
 sound;
 Like that long-buried body of the king,
 Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
 Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
 Slipt into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
 Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
 Sunning himself in a waste field alone—
 Old, and a mine of memories—who had
 served,
 Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
 And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMEY AYLMEY, that almighty
 man,
 The county God—in whose capacious hall,
 Hung with a hundred shields, the family
 tree
 Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate
 king—
 Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the
 spire,
 Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-
 gates
 And swang besides on many a windy
 sign—
 Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
 Saw from his windows nothing save his
 own—
 What lovelier of his own had he than her,
 His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
 As heiress and not heir regretfully?
 But 'he that marries her marries her name'
 This fiat somewhat soothed himself and
 wife,
 His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,

Inspid as the Queen down a card ;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly men ;
Than the cover shadow in a jekky sun.

A mass of hops and poppy mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook !
A sleepy land, where under the same
wind

The same old rut would deepen year by
year ;

Where almost all the village had one
name ;

Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the
Hall

And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Three miles ; so that Kestary and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other ; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well
had made

The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his
priest

Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
Daughters of God ; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it
—

Somewhere beneath his own low range of
roof,

Have also he his many divided tree ?
There was an Aylmer's Aylmer's marriage
—

Where the red rose was better than itself,
And York's whose tree could be Lons-
—

With somewhat worse which each had
pick'd to death

'Not proven' Averill said, or laughingly,
'Some other race of Aylmer's'—prov'n or
no,

What could he? what, if other or the
same?

He had not set his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before—
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbour-
hood.

Would often, in his walks with Edith,
claim

A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing
him.

Sanguine he was ; a fair less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek ; and eager eyes,
that still

Took joyful note of all things joyful,
beam'd,

Beneath a manlike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt
on her.

Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
Was subject to the sun or the moon,

Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore ; bounteously
made,

And yet so finely, that a troublous touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a
day,

A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the
first.

Leolin's first nurse was, five years after,
her—

So much the boy loved ; but when his
date

Doubled her own, for want of playmates,
he

(Since Averill was a decad and a half
His older, and their parents one or ground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite, and
roll'd

His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
 Against the rush of the air in the prone
 swing,
 Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-
 ranged
 Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it
 green
 In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
 Show'd her the fairy footings on the grass,
 The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
 The petty maretail forest, fairy pines,
 Or from the tiny pitted target blew
 What looked a flight of fairyarrows aimed
 All at one mark, all hitting : make-be-
 lieves
 For Edith and himself : or else he forged,
 But that was later, boyish histories
 Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,
 wreck,
 Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true
 love
 Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude and
 faint,
 But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
 Lay hidden as the music of the moon
 Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.
 And thus together, save for college-times
 Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
 As ever painter painted, poet sang,
 Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
 And more and more, the maiden woman-
 grown,
 He wasted hours with Averill ; there,
 when first
 The tented winter-field was broken up
 Into that phalanx of the summer spears
 That soon should wear the garland ; there
 again
 When harr and bine were gather'd ;
 lastly there
 At Christmas ; ever welcome at the Hall,
 On whose dull sameness his full tide of
 youth

Broke with a phosphorescence charming
 even
 My lady ; and the Baronet yet had laid
 No bar between them : dull and self-
 involved,
 Tall and erect, but bending from his
 height
 With half-allowing smiles for all the
 world,
 And mighty courteous in the main—his
 pride
 Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring—
 He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
 Would care no more for Leolin's walking
 with her
 Than for his old Newfoundland's, when
 they ran
 To loose him at the stables, for he rose
 Twofooted at the limit of his chain,
 Roaring to make a third : and how should
 Love,
 Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-
 met eyes
 Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
 Such dear familiarities of dawn ?
 Seldom, but when he does, Master of
 all.

 So these young hearts not knowing that
 they loved,
 Not she at least, nor conscious of a
 bar
 Between them, nor by plight or broken
 ring
 Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
 Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
 By Averill : his, a brother's love, that
 hung
 With wings of brooding shelter o'er her
 peace,
 Might have been other, save for Leolin's—
 Who knows ? but so they wander'd, hour
 by hour

father'd the blossom that perfume'd, and
 bleed

The night-cup that still itself arose.

A willow half-reveal'd her to herself,
 For all beyond her feelings, within the
 hood

Vault, with here and there a blossom, cut
 by willow moss, arise the laurel's
 beams,

A freestone barn of Edith, on low levels
 Them (moulding) did into each other, but
 At noon (not for'd), with a rest of bloom,
 Her art, her hand, her counsel all had
 wrought

As to them: here was one that, summer-
 hand'd,

Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-
 joy

In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
 The warm-blue breathings of a hidden
 hearth

Strike from a leaver of vine and honey-
 suckle:

Two lock'd all roses, and another
 were

A /dove-like voice of jasmine wren with
 birds

The bell & ring (as of gillyflowers—
 Above it) this, a milky-way on earth,
 Like visions in the Northern dream's
 houses,

A My-avenue leading to the Rose:
 One, almost to the martin-haunted gaves
 A summer barn (as of hollyhocks);
 Each, its own charm; and Edith's every-
 where;

And Edith ever visitant with him,
 He had loved her from Edith, of his power:
 For she—so lowly-dovey and so loving,
 Queenly responsive when the legal hand
 Rose from the clay it work'd in as the
 poet.

Not seeing highway team and common
 by,

Not feeling—softly covered from a breath
 That makes the lowest heat it, but a sense
 Of comfort and an open road of help,
 A spacious presence floating the poor
 roads

Revered as theirs, but kinder than them-
 selves

To ailing wife or wailing infancy
 Or old bedridden palsy,—was adorn'd:

He, loved for her and for himself. A
 grasp

Having the warmth and muscle of the
 heart,

A chittry way with children, and (as long)
 Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
 Were no false passport to that easy realm,
 Where once with Leolin at her side the
 girl,

Nursing a child, and turning to the
 warmth

The tender pink five-banded baby-sate,
 Heard the good mother softly whisper
 'E'en,

God bless 'em: marriages are made in
 Heaven!

A flash of steel (as of gold) should be
 her.

My lady's Indian kinsman unannounc'd
 With half a score of worthy base-born:
 His own, that home and hall and village,
 Sear'd by the close calique, was not fair:
 Fatter his talk, a tongue that ruled the
 hour,

Thou' smiling beautiful; so when first he
 dash'd

Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
 Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
 Of patron 'Good! my lady's kinsman
 good!'

My lady with her fingers interlock'd,

And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
 Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
 To listen : unawares they flitted off,
 Busying themselves about the flowerage
 That stood from out a stiff brocade in
 which,

The meteor of a splendid season, she.
 Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
 Slept thro' the stately minut of those
 days :

But Lalith's eager fancy hurried with him
 Stratch'd thro' the perilous passes of his
 life :

Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye,
 Hated him with a momentary hate.
 Well-remembered, as the rumour ran, was
 he :

I know not, for he spoke not, only
 shower'd

His oriental gifts on everyone :

And most on Edith : like a storm he
 came,

And shook the house, and like a storm
 he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
 He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
 When others had been tested) there was

one,
 A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
 Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd
 itself

Fine as ice-ferns on January panes—
 Made by a breath. I know not whence
 at first,

Nor of what race, the work ; but as he
 told

The boy, storming a hill-fort of thieves—
 He got it ; for their captain after fight,
 He commad'd having fought their last
 below,

Was climbing up the valley ; at whom he
 shot :

Down from the beetling crag to which he
 clung

Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
 This dagger with him, which when now
 admired

By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
 At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
 Tost over all her presents petulantly :
 And when she show'd the wealthy
 scabbard, saying

'Look what a lovely piece of workman-
 ship !'

Slight was his answer 'Well—I care not
 for it :'

Then playing with the blade he prick'd
 his hand.

'A gracious gift to give a lady, this !'

'But would it be more gracious' ask'd
 the girl

'Were I to give this gift of his to one
 That is no lady?' 'Gracious? No' said
 he.

'Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon
 me,

I seem to be ungraciousness itself.'

'Take it' she added sweetly, 'tho' his
 gift :

For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
 I care not for it either ;' and he said

'Why then I love it :' but Sir Aylmer
 past,

And neither loved nor liked the thing he
 heard.

The next day came a neighbour,
 Blues and reds

They talk'd of ; blues were sure of it, he
 thought :

Then of the latest fox—where started—
 kill'd

Idiot! a villain!—¹ Poor had he been,
My Peter, true? and did Sir Aylmer know
That gross gawk-gizmos follow had here,
ought?

Then made his pleasure echo, hand to
hand;

And rolling as it were the substance of it
Between his palms a measure up and
down—

'The body were warm, the limbs were
warm upon him;

We have him now—² and had Sir Aylmer
said—

Nay, had he trust—the lady was ringing
of it—

That blacksmith—wonderstrange—one
they know—

Law from the nursery—who could trust
a child?

That cursed France with her egalities!

And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
With nearing chair and lower'd accent)
think—

For people talk'd—that it was wisely wise
To let that handsome fellow Aynall walk
So freely with his daughter? people
talk'd—

The boy might go—³ motion into him;
The girl might be—⁴ outrageously kind;
Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stifling spoke:
'The girl and boy, Sir, know their
differences!'

'Good,' said his friend, 'but wouldst!
and he, ' enough.

More than enough, Sir! I can count my
own.'

They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer
went home.

Edie, but we had the honors of the
house.

Had father had, and Edith that same
ought;

Edie as the justice's daughter, a rough
piece

Of early right notice, seeing which
Withdrawing by the window close to Edie
Which Lavinia open'd, downcast looking upon
him

A piteous glance, and vanishing—⁵ He, a—
one

Caught in a burst of unaccustomed tears,
And pelted with outrageous epithets,
Turning behind the Powers of the Home—
Oveither side the hearth, immoveable lay,
Cooling her false cheek with a featherfan,
Him, glaring, by his own side could
spurr'd,

And, like a beast head-ribbed, breathing
hard.

'Ungenerous, inhuman, base,
Presumptuous! trusted as he was with
her,

The sole succeder to their wealth, their
lands,

The best remaining pillar of their tower,
Thro' the transmuter of their bestial name,
Their child!—⁶ One child!—⁷ One
child!—⁸ One child!—⁹ Inf still,

Like whom from beyond a hollow, came
He—¹⁰ the first one—¹¹ Last he said,

'they, with me! let your fortune be to
make.

I swear you shall not enter from out of
mine.

Now somewhat as you have pointed an
her,

Perplex her, some her half-brain's excess,
Soothe from her duty to herself and to—
Things in an Aylmer dam's responsible.

For as we track ourselves—I say that
this—

That I withhold favour and remembrance
From yourself yours his eyes, shall you do
Sir, when you are here—¹² that you shall not
see him—

No, you shall write, and not to her, but
me :

At: you shall say that having spoke
with me,

And after look'd into yourself, you find
That you meant nothing—as indeed you
know

That you meant nothing. Such a match
as this !

Impossible, prodigious !' These were
words,

Assorted by his measure of himself,
Arguing boundless forbearance : after
which,

And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, ' I
So find a traitor to myself and her.
Never oh never,' for about as long
A life wind-hover hangs in balance, pause—
Sir Aylmer, riddling from the storm
within,

Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and
crying

' How should I find you by my door—
again,

My men shall lash you from them like a
dog ;

Hence !' with a sudden execration drove
The footstool from before him, and arose ;
So, stammering ' scoundrel ' out of teeth,
that ground

A terrible dream, while Leolin still
stare'd half-aghast, the fierce old man
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face
Mild for the reverence of the hearth, but
now,

Uplifted a pale and unimpassion'd moon.
Vext with unworthy madness, and con-
form'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye
That watch'd him, till he heard the
ponderous door

Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the
land,

Went Leolin ; then, his passions all in
flood

And masters of his motion, furiously
Down thro' the bright lawns to his
brother's ran,

And foam'd away his heart at Averill's
ear :

Whom Averill solaced as he might,
amazed :

The man was his, had been his father's,
friend :

He must have seen, himself had seen it
long ;

He must have known, himself had known :
besides,

He never yet had set his daughter forth
Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Where our Caucasians let themselves be
sold.

Some one, he thought, had slander'd
Leolin to him.

' Brother, for I have loved you more as
son

Than brother, let me tell you : I myself—
What is their pretty saying ? jilted, is it ?
Jilted I was : I say it for your peace.

Pain'd, and as bearing in myself the
shame

The woman should have borne, humili-
ated,

I lived for years a stunted sunless life ;
Till after our good parents past away
Watching your growth, I seem'd again to
grow.

Leolin, I almost sin in envying you :
The very whitest lamb in all my fold
Loves you : I know her : the world
thought she has

Is whiter even than her pretty hand :
She must prove true : for, brother, when
two fight

The strongest will, and truth and love
are strength,
And you are happy: let her parents be!

But Lucia cried out the more when
they—

Insidious, brazen, heartless! hoarse,
wealth,

Their wealth, their heiress! wealth
stronger than theirs.

For twenty matches: Were he lord of
this,

Why twenty boys and girls should marry
on it,

And forty lusty ones bless him, and him-
self

Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He be-
lieved!

THE filly marriage-kindling Mammon
made

The heifer of the sties: nature ever

Was mother of the foul adulteries

That saturate soul with body. Name,
two! name,

Their names, name! they sought the
ground; the worth

Was being earth's. Ah how pale the
lust looked!

Death, 'twas night! they must have met
her

Beyond all tolerance. These old phantoms
looked

Those partridge-owners of a thousand
years,

Who had address'd to their households,
using nothing

Since lighters—why, the greater their
disgrace?

Full back upon a name! not, not as that!
Not say it weds, make it wader! wade!

With such a vintage ground forrablement!
He had known a town, a quinquennial of

man,

The life of all—who madly loved—and he
Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,
Had miss'd the life, and writ in cost.
He would not do it! her sweet face and
faith

Hold him from that! but he had power to
know:

Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too: the world should ring
of him

To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their
graves:

Chancellor, or what is greatest would he
be—

'O brother, I am grieved to learn your
grief—

Give me my fling, and let me say my say.'

At which, like one that sees his own
cesses,

And easily forgives it as his own,

He laugh'd: and then was silent; but
presently

Wept like a worm! and burst. A wail
—ing

How low his heart!—sweat had fallen,
faded!

His richest dressing from a linen reserved
For banquets, praised the waning rod, and
old!

The vintage—when Mrs. Aylmer came of
age—

Then drank and got it; till at length the
two,

That Lucia loved and he! would say
That much allowance must be made for
man.

After an easy show the kinder glow
Faded with evening, but he purposed field.

Yet once by night, when the leaves rose,
A position meeting under the tall pine—

That darken'd all the northward of her
Hall.

Him, to her meek and modest bosom prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her :
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labour for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. 'Write to
me !

They loved me, and because I love their
child

They hate me ; there is war between us,
dear,

Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we
must remain

Sacred to one another.' So they talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort : the wind
blew ;

The rain of heaven, and their own bitter
tears,

Tears, and the careless rain of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
In darkness, and above them roar'd the
pine.

So Looslin went ; and as we task our-
selves

To learn a language known but smatter-
ingly

In phrases here and there at random, toil'd
Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune led,
May find a pathway out to wealth and
fame.

The jests, that flash'd about the pleader's
room,

Lightning of the hour, the pun, the
sardonic tale, —

Old scandals buried now seven decads deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,

And left the living scandal that shall die—
Were dead to him already ; bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in
hopes,

And prodigal of all brain-labour he,
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
Beside the river-bank : and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of
power

Were bloodier, and the according hearts
of men
Seem'd harder too ; but the soft river-
breeze,

Which fann'd the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him
breathed

Far purer in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's
cousin,

Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,
Drove in upon the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayan muck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all
mankind,

Answer'd all queries touching those at
home

With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,
And fain had haled him out into the
world,

And air'd him there : his nearer friend
would say

'Screw not the chord too sharply lest it
snap.'

Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept
it warm,

Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :

For heart, I think, help'd head : her letters
 too.

Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
 Like broken music, written as she found
 Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
 Cham'd him thro' every labyrinth till he
 saw

As usual, a hope, a light breaking upon the

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
 Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued them-
 selves

To sell her, those good parents, for her
 good.

Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
 Might lie within their compass, him they
 lured

Into their net made pleasant by the baits
 Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
 So month by month the noise about their
 doors,

And distant blaze of those dull banquets,
 made

The nightly wirer of their innocent hare
 Faster before he took it. All in vain.
 Sullen, defiant, pitying, wrath, return'd
 I wish'd respectal revuls from their seat

So soon, that the folly taking wings
 Slipp'd over these lazy limits down the wind
 With earnest, and became in other fields
 A mockery to the yeomen over ale,
 And lightest to their hearts : but thence it
 home,

As hunters round a hunted creature draw
 The circumference and closer toward the
 snail,

Narrow'd her goings out and comings in ;
 Trapped her to the house of Awerill,
 Then closed her access in the wealthier
 farms.

Last from her own household of the poor
 They barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet her
 chest

Kept colour ; window ! but, O mystery !
 What amulet drew her down to that old
 oak,

So old, that twenty years before, a part
 Falling had let opposite the head of John—
 Once gravelled, could have arm'd a tree for
 now

The broken base of a black tower, a cove
 Of touchwood, with a single flourishing
 spray.

There the manorial lord too curiously
 Raking in that millennial touchwood—
 Found for himself a bitter treasure-trove ;
 Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and seal
 Writhing a letter from his child, for which
 Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
 A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to fly,
 But scared with threats of jail and halberd
 gave

To him that fluster'd his poor parish with
 The letter which he brought, and sweet
 besides

To play their go-between as heretofore
 Not let their know themselves betray'd ;
 and then,

Soul-stricken at their kindness to him,
 went

Hating his own best heart and miserable

Therefore, off from out a slumber
 dream

The father panting willy, and ill, as always
 Aroused the black rattle on his clasp,
 Sweeping the frothfly from the fence
 brush'd

Thro' the fire, against toward his
 treasure-trove,

Isos'd it, took home, and to my lady,—
 who made

A downward descent of her manorial wealth,
 I think in all the manor,—and ; and
 tone.

As if the living power symbol'd there

Were living nerves to feel the rent ; and
 burnt,
 Now chafing at his own great self defied,
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of
 scorn
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
 Of such a *foetus* like a children's child.
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
 Hopeless of answer : then tho' Averill
 wrote
 And bad him with good heart sustain
 himself—
 All would be well—the lover needed not,
 For *concupiscence* *reflex* *concupiscence* and well,
 An *intrusting* once at night about the place,
 Then by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
 Raging return'd : nor was it well for her
 To *rejoice* in the garden now, and grove of
 flowers,
 Watch'd even there ; and one was set to
 watch
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd
 them all,
 Yet *loiterer* from his readings : one
 indeed,
 Worn'd with his wines, or taking pride
 in her,
 Still *bold* to *renew*, he kiss'd her tenderly
 Not knowing what possess'd him : that
 one day—
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth ;
conspiring, for my lady follow'd suit,
conspiring *ling's* returning rose : and then
 cross'd
 My *Martin's* summer of his faded love,
He *solaced* by kindness ; after this
The *subservient* *his* *child* *without* *answer* :
The *master* *flour'd* in *stallower* *ceremonies* :
Offer *one* *kindly* *smile*, *one* *kindly* *word* :
 So that the gentle creature shut from all
 Her *charitable* *and* *loose* *free*

With twenty months of silence, slowly lost
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
 Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
 The weakness of a people or a house,
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or
 men,
 Or almost all that is, hurting the hurt—
 Save Christ as we believe him—found the
 girl
 And flung her down upon a couch of fire,
 Where careless of the household faces near,
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,
 She, and with her the race of Aylmer,
 past.

 Star to star vibrates light : may soul to
 soul
 Strike thro' a finer element of her own ?
 So,—from afar,—touch as at once ? or
 why
 That night, that moment, when she named
 his name,
 Did the keen shriek 'Yes love, yes, Edith,
 yes,'
 Shrill, till the comrade of his chambers
 woke,
 And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,
 With a weird bright eye, sweating and
 trembling,
 His hair as it were crackling into flames,
 His body half flung forward in pursuit,
 And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a
 flyer :
 Nor knew he wherefore he had made the
 cry ;
 And being much befool'd and idioted
 By the rough amity of the other, sank
 As into sleep again. The second day,
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
 A breaker of the bitter news from home,
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with
 death
 Beside him, and the dagger which himself

And princely halls, and farms, and flowing
 lawns,
 And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
 And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
 In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*; for
 thine
 Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
 Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
 The deathless ruler of thy dying house
 is wounded to the death that cannot die;
 And tho' thou numberest with the fol-
 lowers
 Of One who cried, "Leave all and follow
 me."
 Thee therefore with His light about thy
 feet,
 Thee with His message ringing in thine
 ears,
 The shall thy brother man, the Lord
 from Heaven,
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty
 God,
 Count the more base idolater of the two;
 Cradler: as thou passing thro' the fire
 bodies, but souls—thy children's—thro'
 the smoke.
 The blight of low desires—darkening
 thine own
 To thine own likeness; or if one of these,
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight and
 fair—
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
 By those who most have cause to sorrow
 for her—
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
 Fairer than the Angel that said "Hail!" she
 mother,
 Who entering fill'd the house with sudden
 light.

For so mine own was brighten'd: where
 indeed
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway?
 whose the babe
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of
 shame
 The common care whom no one cared for,
 leapt
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
 As with the mother he had never known,
 In gambols; for her fresh and innocent
 eyes
 Had such a star of morning in their blue,
 That all neglected places of the field
 Broke into nature's music when they saw
 her.
 Low was her voice, but won mysterious
 way
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
 Was all but silence—free of alms her
 hand—
 The hand that robed your cottage-walls
 with flowers
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;
 How often placed upon the sick man's
 brow
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow
 smooth!
 Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
 One burthen and she would not lighten it?
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
 Or when some heat of difference sparkled
 out,
 How sweetly would she glide between
 your wraths,
 And steal you from each other! for she
 walk'd
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee!
 And one—of him I was not bid to speak—
 Was always with her, whom you also knew.

Him that you loved, for he was worthy love.
 And those had been together from the first ;
 They might have been together till the last.
 Friends, the frail bark of ours, when
 only tried.

May woe's dead without the pilot's guilt,
 Without the captain's knowledge : hope
 with me.

Whose shame is that, if he went hence
 with shame ?

Nay, were the fields of living both of these
 Lory to wane (hours and widow'd walls,
 " My house is left unto me desolate.")

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept :
 but some,

Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than
 those

That knit themselves for summer shadow,
 saw'd

At their great lord. He, when it seem'd
 he saw

No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but
 fork'd

Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
 Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-
 like.

Front 'em when the preacher's cadence
 flow'd

Suffering thro' all the gentle ambitions
 Of his best child, the wife, who watch'd
 his face.

Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth ;
 And ' O pray God that he hold up' she
 thought

' Or surely I shall shame myself and him.'

' Not yours the blame : for who trouble
 your hearth.

Can take the place—if wishing me you cry
 " Our house is left unto me desolate.")

But thou, O thou that follow'st, had'st thou
 known,

O that that moment, had'st thou under-
 stood

The things belonging to thy grave and
 ours !

Is there no promise on the voice that calls
 Doom upon kings, or in the waste " Re-
 pent ?"

Is not our own child on the narrow way,
 Who down he thins that stumbles in the
 broad

Cries " Come up hither," as a prophet to us ?
 Is there no smould'ring eye with flint and
 rock ?

Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
 No desolation but by sword and fire ?

Yes, as your moaning widows, and myself
 Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss—
 Give me your prayers, for he is past your
 prayers,

Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
 But I that thought myself long-suffering,
 woe'd.

Exceeding " pure in spirit"—how the
 words

Have twisted back upon themselves, and
 mine

Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wail
 my voice

A nothing (except of the worth of soul
 To blow these sacrifices thro' the world)
 Some like his sacrifice (of his own life)
 To rid the world of sin, but there—out
 you'd—so!

Lightens from her own kindred Hell—O
 there

The red fruit of an old fidelity—

The track of Christian passion left to rot,
 They clog together in the ghastly soil—
 The land all shambles—naught but
 Flash from the bridge, and ever-miner'd
 Fences.

By stones that darken with the gathering
 wall.

Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
 Is this a time to madden madness then?
 Was this a time for these to flaunt their
 pride?
 May Pharaoh's darkness, fold as dense
 as those
 Which hid the Holiest from the people's
 eyes—
 Ere the great death, shroud this great sin
 from all!
 Doubtless our narrow world must canvass
 it:
 O rather pray for those and pity them,
 Who, thro' their own desire accomplish'd,
 bring
 Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the
 grave—
 Who broke the bond which they desired
 to break,
 Which else had link'd their race with
 times to come—
 Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,
 Grossly contriving their dear daughter's
 doom—
 Poor souls, and knew not what they did,
 but her
 Ignorant, devising their own daughter's
 death!
 May not that earthly chastisement suffice?
 Have not our love and reverence left them
 here?
 Will not another take their heritage?
 Will there be children's laughter in their
 hall
 For ever and for ever, or one stone
 left on another, or is it a light thing
 That I, their guest, their host, their
 ancient friend,
 I made by these the last of all my race,
 Must cry to these the last of theirs, as
 cried
 Christ ere His agony to those that swore
 Not by the temple but the gold, and made

Their own traditions God, and slew the
 Lord,
 And left their memories a world's curse—
 "Behold,
 Your house is left unto you desolate?"
 Ended he had not, but she brook'd no
 more:
 Long since her heart had beat remorse-
 lessly,
 Her cramped-up sorrow pain'd her, and a
 sense
 Of meanness in her unresisting life.
 Then their eyes vext her; for on entering
 He had cast the curtains of their seat
 aside—
 Black velvet of the costliest—she herself
 Had seen to that: fain had she closed
 them now,
 Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
 Her husband inch by inch, but when she
 laid,
 Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
 His face with the other, and at once, as falls
 A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
 The woman shrieking at his feet, and
 swoon'd.
 Then her own people bore along the nave
 Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre
 face
 Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty
 years:
 And her the Lord of all the landscape
 round
 Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all
 Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out
 Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
 Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
 Stumbling across the market to his death,
 Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and
 seem'd
 Always about to fall, grasping the pews
 And oaken finials till he touch'd the door;

Yet to the lychgate, where his chair
stood,
Stride from the porch, tall and erect,
again.

But no more did either pass the gate
Save under pall with buttons. In some
nooth,

Thine weary and yet over-swear'd limbs.
The childless mother went to seek her
child ;

And when he felt the silted of his home
About him, saw the change and not the
change,

And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors
Staring for ever from their gilded walls
On him their last descendant, his own head
Began to droop, to fall : the man became
Imbecile ; his one word was ' desolate ;'
Dead for two years before his death was
he ;

But when the second Christmas came,
escaped

His keepers, and the silence which he felt
To find a deeper in the narrow glim
fly with child ; nor wanted at his end
The dark retinue reverencing death

At golden thresholds ; nor from tender
hours,

And those who sorrow'd o'er a peaceful
race.

Pay, the vault on the tyrant's grave.
Then the great Hall was wholly broken
down,

And the broad woodland parcel'd into
farms ;

And where the two contrived their
daughter's good,

Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made
his run,

The hedgehog underneath the plantain
hours.

The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,

The slow worm creeps, and the
wood thrush
follows the stream, and all its eye's hold,

SEA DREAMS.

A cray cleat, but gently here and there ;
His wife, an unknown mother's
child—

One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three
years old :

They, thinking that her clear germander
eye

Droop in the giant-factored city-glim
Came, with a month's leave given them,
to the sea :

For which his gains were dock'd, however
small :

Small were his gains, and hard his work ;
besides,

Their slender household fortunes (for the
man

Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
Trembled in perilous places o'er a sleep :

And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he cursed his credulous-
ness,

And that one unctuous mouth which lured
him, rogue,

To buy strange shares in some Peruvian
mine

Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd
a stake.

All sand and rind and deep intruding cave,
At close of day ; slept, woke, and went
the next,

The Sabbath, pious variers from the
church,

To chapel ; where a heated pulpitist,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,

Announced the coming doom, and ful-
minated

Against the scarlet woman and her crew :

For sideways up he swung his arms, and
shriek'd

'Thus, thus with violence,' ev'n as if he
held

The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel: 'Thus with violence

Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;

Then comes the deed.' The gentle-
hearted wife

Stood shuddering at the ruin of a world;

He at his own: but when the wordy storm
Had ended, forth they came and paced
the shore,

Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves.

Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce
believed

(The sootflake of so many a summer still
Clung to their fancies) that they saw, (the sea,
snow on, and they walk'd, and now on
cliff,

Lingering about the thymy promontories,
Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
And tossed in the east': then homeward and
to bed:

Where she, who kept a tender Christian
hope,

Haunting a holy text, and still to that

Returning, as the bird returns, at night,

'Let not the sun go down upon your
wrath,'

Said, 'Love, forgive him: ' but he did not
speak;

And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
Remembering her dear Lord who died for
all,

And nursing on the little lives of men,

And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full

gale

Rose with ground-swell, which, on the
fastened rocks,

Teaching, upjetted in spirits of wild sea-
smoke,

And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and
fell

In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon
Dead claps of thunder from within the
cliffs

Heard thro' the living roar. At this the
babe,

Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd
and woke

The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
'A wreck, a wreck!' then turn'd, and
groaning said,

'Forgive! How many will say, "for-
give," and find

A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer! No; the sin
That neither God nor man can well for-
give,

Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
Not first, and third, which are a riper first?
Too ripe, too late! they come too late
for use.

Ah love, there surely lives in man and
beast

Something divine to warn them of their
foes:

And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
Said, "Trust him not;" but after, when I
came

To know him more, I lost it, knew him
less;

Fought with what seem'd my own un-
charity;

Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;
Made more and more allowance for his
talk;

Went further, fool! and trusted him with
all,

All my poor scrapings from a dozen years

Of dust and deskwork : there is no such
mine.

None ; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Ruin'd ! ruin'd ! the sea
rars

Ruin : a fearful night !

'Not fearful ; fair.'

Said the good wife, 'if every star in
heaven

Can make it fair : you do but hear the tide.
Had you ill dreams ?'

'O yes,' he said, 'I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless outer deep
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the
cliffs.

I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved
upon it

In darkness : then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. "What a world," I
thought,

"To live in !" but in moving on I found
Only the landward exit of the cave,
Bright with the sun upon the stream
beyond :

And near the light a giant woman sat,
All over curvy, like a pickaxe (said),
A pickaxe in her hand : then out I slipp'd
Into a land all sun and blossom, trim
As high as heaven, and every bird that sing'd
And here the night-light flickering in my
eyes

Awoke me.'

'That was then your dream,' she said,
'Not sad, but sweet.'

'So sweet, I lay,' said he,
'And mus'd upon it, drifting up the
stream

In fancy, till I slept again, and pleas'd
The broken vision ; for I dream'd that still
The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk'd upon the
brink :

I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her
of it :

"It came," she said, "by working in the
mines :"

O then to ask her of my shares, I thought ;
And ask'd ; but not a word ; she shook
her head.

And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder ; and we
reach'd

A mountain, like a wall of burs and
thorns ;

But she with her strong feet up the steep
hill

Trod out a path : I follow'd ; and at top
She pointed seaward : there a fleet of
glass,

That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunder,
past

In sunshine : right across its track these
lay,

Down in the water, a long reef of gold.
Or what seem'd gold : and I was glad at
first

To think that in our often-ransack'd world
Still so much gold was left ; and then I
fear'd

Lest the gyrtavy there should splinter
on it,

And fearing waved my arm to warn them
off ;

An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it)
near'd.

Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and
vanish'd, and I woke,

I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
 My dream was Life; the woman honest
 Work;
 And my poor venture but a fleet of glass
 Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.'

'Nay,' said the kindly wife to comfort
 him,
 'You raised your arm, you tumbled down
 and broke
 The glass with little Margaret's medicine
 in it;
 And, breaking that, you made and broke
 your dream:
 A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks.'

'No trifle,' groan'd the husband;
 'yesterday
 I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
 That which I ask'd the woman in my
 dream.
 Like her, he shook his head. "Show me
 the books!"
 He dodged me with a long and loose ac-
 count.
 "The books, the books!" but he, he could
 not wait,
 Bound on a matter he of life and death:
 When the great Books (see Daniel seven
 and ten)
 Were open'd, I should find he meant me
 well;
 And then began to bloat himself, and ooze
 All over with the fat affectionate smile
 That makes the widow lean. "My dearest
 friend,
 Have faith, have faith! We live by faith,"
 said he;
 "And all things work together for the good
 Of those;"—it makes me sick to quote him
 —last
 Gript my hand hard, and with God-bless-
 you went.

I stood like one that had received a blow:
 I found a hard friend in his loose accounts,
 A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
 A curse in his God-bless-you: then my
 eyes
 Pursued him down the street, and far away,
 Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
 Read rascal in the motions of his back,
 And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee.'

'Was he so bound, poor soul?' said
 the good wife;
 'So are we all: but do not call him, love,
 Before you prove him, rogue, and proved,
 forgive.
 His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his
 friend
 Wrongs himself more, and ever bears
 about
 A silent court of justice in his breast,
 Himself the judge and jury, and him-
 self
 The prisoner at the bar, ever condemn'd:
 And that drags down his life: then comes
 what comes
 Hereafter: and he meant, he said he
 meant,
 Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you
 well.'

"With all his conscience and one eye
 askew!"—
 Love, let me quote these lines, that you
 may learn
 A man is likewise counsel for himself,
 Too often, in that silent court of yours—
 "With all his conscience and one eye
 askew,
 So false, he partly took himself for true;
 Whose pious talk, when most his heart
 was dry,
 Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his
 eye;

Who, never naming God except for gain,
 So never took that useful name in vain,
 Made Him his catspaw and the Cross his
 tool,
 And Christ the bait to trap his slaves and
 fool;
 Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he
 forged,
 And snake-like slined his victim ere he
 gorged;
 And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
 Arising, did his holy oily best,
 Dropping the too rough II in Hell and
 Heaven,
 To spread the Word by which himself
 had thriven."
 How like you this old satire?'

'Nay,' she said,

'I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,
 Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
 Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
 But will you hear *my* dream, for I had one
 That altogether went to music? Still
 It awed me.'

Then she told it, having dream'd
 Of that same coast.

'— But round the North, a light

A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapour, lay,
 And ever in it a low musical note
 Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd, a
 ridge

Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
 Grew with the growing note, and when
 the note

Had reach'd a thunderous fullness, on
 those cliffs

Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as
 that

Living within the belt) whereby she saw
 That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs
 no more,

But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
 Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
 One after one: and then the great ridge
 drew,

Lessening to the lessening music, back,
 And past into the belt and swell'd again
 Slowly to music: ever when it broke
 The statues, king or saint, or founder fell;
 Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin
 left

Came men and women in dark clusters
 round,

Some crying, "Set them up! they shall
 not fall!"

And others "Let them lie, for they have
 fall'n."

And still they strove and wrangled: and
 she grieved

In her strange dream, she knew not why,
 to find

Their wildest wailings never out of tune
 With that sweet note; and ever as their
 shrieks

Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
 Returning, while none mark'd it, on the
 crowd

Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd
 their eyes

Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept
 away

The men of flesh and blood, and men of
 stone,

To the waste deeps together.

'Then I fixt

My wistful eyes on two fair images,
 Each crown'd with stars and high among
 the stars,—

The Virgin Mother standing with her
 child

Half up on one of those dark minster-
 fronts—

Till she began to totter, and the child

Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I
 woke,
And my dream awed me :—well—but
 what are dreams?
Yours came but from the breaking of a
 glass,
And mine but from the crying of a child.'

'Child? No!' said he, 'but this tide's
 roar, and his.
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
And loud-lung'd Anabaptianisms
(Altho' I grant but little music there)
Went both to make your dream: but if
 there were
A music harmonizing our wild cries,
Sphere music: such as that you dream'd
 about,
Why, that would make our passions far
 too like
The discords dear to the musician. No—
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns
 of heaven:
True Devils with no ear, they howl in
 tune
With nothing but the Devil!'

 "True" indeed!
One of our town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on
 the shore;
While you were running down the sands,
 and made
The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow
 flap,
Good man, to please the child. She
 brought strange news.
Why were you silent when I spoke to-
 night?
I had set my heart on your forgiving him
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the
 dead.'

'Dead! who is dead?'

'The man your eye pursued.
A little after you had parted with him,
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease.'

'Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart
 had he
To die of? dead!'

'Ah, dearest, if there be
A devil in man, there is an angel too,
And if he did that wrong you charge him
 with,
His angel broke his heart. But your
 rough voice
(You spoke so loud) has roused the child
 again.
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
Without her "little birdie?" well then,
 sleep,
And I will sing you "birdie."'

Saying this,
The woman half turn'd round from him
 she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro'
 the night
Her other, found (for it was close beside)
And half embraced the basket cradle-head
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant
 bough
That moving moves the nest and nestling,
 sway'd
The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let em fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

'She sleeps: let us too, let all evil
sleep.

He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong: forgive him,
dear,
And I shall sleep the sounder!'

Then the man,

'His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to
come.

Yet let your sleep for this one night be
sound:

I do forgive him!'

'Thanks, my love,' she said,

'Your own will be the sweeter,' and they
slept.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and
best-lover, Camilla, has been wedded to his
friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate
the story of his own love for her, and the strange
sequel of it. He speaks of having been haunted
in delirium by visions and the sound of bells,
sometimes tolling for a funeral, and at last ring-
ing for a marriage: but he breaks away, over-
come, as he approaches the Event, and a witness
to it completes the tale.]

HE flies the event: he leaves the event
to me:

Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the
bells,

Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and
heart—

But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say 'Continue.' Well, he
had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour
of his!

He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close— but
now—

Whether they ~~took~~ his lady's marriage-
bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains and
the Bay,

The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ibna does

The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had
gone

Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning, and divinely as it seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it
not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look
at her—

No not for months: but, when the eleventh
moon

After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and
said,

Would you could toll me out of life, but
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without a
praise :

All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.

And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm).
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of
heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here
and hale—

Not plunge headforemost from the moun-
tain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not
he :

He knew the meaning of the whisper
now,

Thought that he knew it. 'This, I
stay'd for this ;

O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no
more :

'The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim
vault,

And, marking there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will
be.

The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bare

Of black and bands of silver, which the
moon

Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to
sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great day
Peal'd on us with that music which rights
all,

And raised us hand in hand.' And kneel-
ing there

Down in the dreadful dust that once was
man,

Dust, as he said, that once was loving
hearts,

Hearts that had beat with such a love as
mine -

Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
her—

He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till help-
less death

And silence made him bold—nay, but I
wrong him,

He revered his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not
even death

Can chill you all at once : ' then starting,
thought

His dreams had come again. 'Do I
wake or sleep ?

Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart
—it beat :

Faint—but it beat : at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it
drown'd

The feebler motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,

He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the
cloak

He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was
born.

There the good mother's kindly minis-
tering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye that
ask'd

'Where?' till the things familiar to her
youth

Had made a silent answer: then she spoke
'Here! and how came I here?' and
learning it

(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)
At once began to wander and to wail,
'Ay, but you know that you must give
me back:

Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was
away—

Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew
where

'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'
—we wail

That seeming something, yet was nothing,
born

Not from believing mind, but shatter'd
nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.

Then, when her own true spirit had re-
turn'd,

'O yes, and you,' she said, 'and none but
you.'

For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him
of it,

And you shall give me back when he
returns.

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian, 'here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to
yourself;

And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of
him

When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love.' And faintly she
replied,

'And I will do *your* will, and none shall
know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be
known.

But all their house was old and loved
them both,

And all the house had known the love-
of both;

Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary:
And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him: myself w
then

Travelling that land, and meant to rest
an hour;

And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was
vile)

And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
 A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
 But there from fever and my care of him
 Sprang up a friendship that may help us
 yet.
 For while we roam'd along the dreary
 coast,
 And waited for her message, piece by piece
 I learnt the drearier story of his life;
 And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,
 Found that the sudden wail his lady made
 Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her
 worth,
 Her beauty even? should he not be taught,
 Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
 The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we part,
 I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the
 soul:
Why makes the sequel pure; tho' some
 of us
 Beginning at the sequel know no more.
 Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird
 That will not hear my call, however
 sweet,
 But if my neighbour whistle answers
 him—
 What matter? there are others in the
 wood.
 Yes: when I saw her (and I thought him
 crazed,
 Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
 A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
 hers
 Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes
 alone,
 But all from these to where she touch'd
 on earth,
 For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
 No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
 To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
 'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me life
 again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.
 His other father you! Kiss him, and
 then
 Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!
 his own
 Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
 And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
 By that great love they both had borne
 the dead,
 To come and revel for one hour with him
 Before he left the land for evermore;
 And then to friends—they were not many
 —who lived
 Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
 And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I
 never
 Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall
 From column on to column, as in a wood,
 Not such as here—an equatorial one,
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd;
 and beneath,
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
 Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
 knows when,
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of
 gloom,
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
 Where nymph and god ran ever round in
 gold—
 Others of glass as costly—some with gems
 Moveable and resettable at will,

And trebling all the rest in value—Ah
heavens!

Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guest: and they,
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's
eyes—

(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seemed
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funeral curtains, looping
down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the
frame.

And just above the parting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with
night
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a
smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate
and drank,
And night—the wines being of such
mildness—
Have just as also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it
all:

What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;

And when the feast was near on end, he
said:

‘There is a custom in the Orient,
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom’—

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meet-
ing hands

And cries about the banquet—‘Beautiful!
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?’

The lover answer'd, ‘There is more
than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me
not

Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the
guest

Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He bring, and sets before him in rich
guise

That which is dearer as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—

“O my heart's lord, would I could show
you,” he says,

“E'en my heart too.” And I propose
to-night

To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

‘But solve me first a doubt.

I knew a man, nor many years ago;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.

He falling sick, and seeming close on
 death,
 His master would not wait until he died,
 But bade his menials bear him from the
 door,
 And leave him in the public way to die.
 I knew another, not so long ago,
 Who found the dying servant, took him
 home,
 And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved
 his life.
 I ask you now, should this first master
 claim
 His service, whom does it belong to? him
 Who thrust him out, or him who saved
 his life?'

This question, so flung down before
 the guests,
 And balanced either way by each, at
 length
 When some were doubtful how the law
 would hold,
 Was handed over by consent of all
 To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of
 phrase.
 And he beginning languidly—his loss
 Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he
 went,
 Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
 Affirming that as long as either lived,
 By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
 The service of the one so saved was due
 All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
 The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
 As at a strong conclusion—'body and soul
 And life and limbs, all his to work his
 will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
 To bring Camilla down before them all.

And crossing her own picture as she came,
 And looking as much lovelier as herself
 Is lovelier than all others—on her head
 A diamond circlet, and from under this
 A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded air,
 Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
 With seeds of gold—so, with that grace
 of hers,
 Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
 That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
 And bearing high in arms the mighty
 babe,
 The younger Julian, who himself was
 crown'd
 With roses, none so rosy as himself—
 And over all her babe and her the jewels
 Of many generations of his house
 Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked
 them out
 As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
 So she came in :—I am long in telling it,
 I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
 Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated
 in—
 While all the guests in mute amazement
 rose—
 And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
 Before the board, there paused and stood,
 her breast
 Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
 Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
 But him she carried, him nor lights nor
 feast
 Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who
 cared
 Only to use his own, and staring wide
 And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd
 world
 About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
 When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian: 'you are
 honour'd now

Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to
me.'

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
And heard him muttering, 'So like, so
like :

She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so
like !'

And then he suddenly ask'd her if she
were.

She shook, and cast her eyes down, and
was dumb.

And then some other question'd if she
came

From foreign lands, and still she did not
speak.

Another, if the boy were hers : but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till
one of them

Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre !' By
his friend

Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her,
dumb !'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all :
'She is but dumb, because in her eyes see
That faithful servant whom we spoke
about,
Obedient to her second master now ;
Which will not last. I have here to-
night a guest
So bound to me by common love and
loss—

What ! shall I bid him more ? in his
behalf,

Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me.
Not only showing? and he himself pro-
nounced

That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of
you

Not to break in on what I say by word!
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart.'
And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—
The passionate moment would not suffer
that—

Past thro' his visions to the burial ; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own
hall ;

And then rose up, and with him all his
guests—

Once more as by enchantment ; all but he,
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said :

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for your
wife ;

And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you
lost,

Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest these hours should lift her to bring her
back :

I leave this land for ever.' Here he
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead
wife

Kiss'd each another with a cry, that rather
seem'd

For some new death than for a life
 renew'd ;
 Whereat the very babe began to wail ;
 At once they turn'd, and caught and
 brought him in
 To their charm'd circle, and, half-killing
 him
 With kisses, round him closed and claspt
 again.
 But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
 From wife and child, and lifted up a face
 All over glowing with the sun of life,
 And love, and boundless thanks—the
 sight of this
 So frighted our good friend, that turning
 to me
 As I saying, 'It is over : let us go'—
 There were our horses ready at the doors—
 We bade them adieu, but mounting
 these
 He past for ever from his native land ;
 And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

LUCRETIUS.

LUCILLA, wedded to Lucretius, found
 Her master cold ; for when the morning
 flush
 Of passion and the first embrace had died
 Between them, tho' he lov'd her none the
 less,
 Yet often when the woman heard his foot
 Return from pacings in the field, and ran
 To greet him with a kiss, the master took
 Small notice, or austerely, for—his mind
 Half buried in some weightier argument,
 Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
 And long roll of the Hexameter—he pa-
 To turn and ponder those three hundred
 scrolls,
 Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
 She brook'd it not ; but wrathful, petulant,

Dreaming some rival, sought and found
 a witch
 Who brew'd the philtre which had power,
 they said,
 To lead an errant passion home again.
 And this, at times, she mingled with his
 drink,
 And this destroy'd him ; for the wicked
 broth
 Confused the chemic labour of the blood,
 And tickling the brute brain within the
 man's
 Made havock among those tender cells,
 and check'd
 His power to shape : he loathed himself ;
 and once
 After a tempest woke upon a morn
 That mock'd him with returning calm,
 and cried :

'Storm in the night ! for thrice I heard
 the rain
 Rushing ; and once the flash of a
 thunderbolt—
 Methought I never saw so fierce a fork-
 Struck out the streaming mountain-side,
 and show'd
 A riotous confluence of watercourses
 Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
 Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

'Storm, and what dreams, ye holy
 Gods, what dreams !
 For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Per-
 chance
 We do but recollect the dreams that come
 Just ere the waking : terrible ! for it seem'd
 A void was made in Nature ; all her bonds
 Crack'd ; and I saw the flaring atom-
 streams
 And torrents of her myriad universe,
 Ruining along the illimitable inane,
 Fly on to clash together again, and make

Another and another fane of things
 For ever : that was mine, my dream. I
 Knew it
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog
 With inward yell and restless forefoot
 plies

His fane of the woodland — but the
 next !

I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
 Came driving rainlike down again on
 earth,

And where it dash'd the reddening mea-
 low, sprang

No dragon warriors from Cadmean tooth.
 For these I thought my dream would show
 to me,

But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies
 worse

Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and round
 me drove

In cirrowing circles till I yell'd again
 Half suffocated, and sprang up, and saw—
 Was it the first beam of my lamplight ?

‘That, then, from utter gloom stood
 out of the breasts,

The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a
 sword

Now over and now under, now direct,
 Pointed itself to pierce, but sunk down
 shamed

At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a fire,
 The fire that left a roofless Iliou,
 Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that I
 woke.

‘Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,
 thine,
 Because I would not one of thine twin
 doves,

Not even a rose, were offer'd to thee ?
 thine,

Forgetful how my rich procemion make
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
 In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

‘Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My
 tongue

Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of
 these

Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?
 Not if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
 From envy, hate and pity, and spite and
 scorn,

Live the great life which all our greatest
 fain

Would follow, center'd in eternal calm.

‘Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like
 ourselves

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I cry
 to thee

To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms
 Round him, and keep him from the lust
 of blood

That makes a steaming slaughter-house of
 Rome.

‘Ay, but I meant not thee ; I meant
 not her,

Whom all the pines of Ith should to see
 Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and
 tempt

The Trojan, while his neat-herds were
 abroad ;

Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter
 wapt

Her Deity false in hocus-magical tears :
 Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
 Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
 Post-like, as the great Scyllian called
 Calliope to grace his golden verse—
 Ay, and this Kypria also—did I take

That popular name of thine to shadow
forth

The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the
thick blood

Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs
are glad

Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of
flowers :

Which things appear the work of mighty
Gods.

'The Gods ! and if I go *my* work is left
Unfinish'd—*if* I go. The Gods, who
haunt

The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a
wind,

Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to
mar

Their sacred everlasting calm ! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may
gain

Letting his own life go. The Gods, the
Gods !

If all be atoms, how then should the
Gods

Being atomic not be dissoluble,
Not follow the great law? My master
held

That Gods there are, for all men so
believe.

I踏st my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless.
Meant? I meant?

I have forgotten what I meant : my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

'Look where another of our Gods, the
Sun,

Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—
Has mounted yonder ; since he never
sware,

Except his wrath were wreak'd on
wretched man,

That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter ; tales ! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roast-
ing ox

Moan round the spit—nor knows he what
he sees ;

King of the East altho' he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance,
slowly lifts

His golden feet on those empurpled stairs
That climb into the windy halls of
heaven :

And here he glances on an eye new-born,
And gets for greeting but a wail of pain ;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the
last ;

And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
And closed by those who mourn a friend
in vain,

Not thankful that his troubles are no
more.

And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the
post

Allotted by the Gods : but he that holds
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he
care

Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at
once,

Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and
sink

Past earthquake—ay, and gout and stone,
 that break
 Bodily toward death, and palsy, death-in-
 life,
 And wretched age—and worst disease of
 all,
 These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
 And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,
 Abominable, strangers at my hearth
 Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
 The phantom husks of something foully
 done,
 And fleeting thro' the boundless universe,
 And blasting the long quiet of my breast
 With animal heat and dire insanity?

‘How should the mind, except it loved
 them, clasp
 These idols to herself? or do they fly
 Now thinner, and now thicker, like the
 flakes
 In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
 Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
 Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
 The keepers down, and throng, their rags
 and they
 The basest, far into that council-hall
 Where sit the best and stateliest of the
 land?’

‘Can I not fling this horror off me
 again,
 Seeing with how great ease Nature can
 smile,
 Balmier and nobler from her bath of
 storm,
 At random ravage? and how easily
 The mountain there has cast his cloudy
 slough,
 Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
 A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and
 within
 All hollow as the hopes and fears of men?’

‘But who was he, that in the garden
 snared
 Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
 To laugh at—more to laugh at in myself—
 For look! what is it? there? you arbutus-
 Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
 Strikes through the wood, sets all the top-
 quivering—
 The mountain quickens into Nymph and
 Faun;
 And here an Oread—how the sun delights
 To glance and shift about her slippery
 sides,
 And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
 And budded bosom-peaks—who this way
 runs
 Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,
 Follows; but him I proved impossible;
 Twy-natured is no nature: yet he draws
 Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now
 Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
 That ever butted his rough brother-brute
 For lust or lusty blood or provender:
 I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she
 Loathes him as well; such a precipitate
 heel,
 Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-
 wing,
 Whirls her to me: but will she fling herself,
 Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-
 foot: nay,
 Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilder-
 ness,
 And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do
 I wish—
 What?—that the bush were leafless? or to
 whelm
 All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,
 I know you careless, yet, behold, to you:
 From childly wont and ancient use I call—
 I thought I lived securely as yourselves—
 No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-
 spite,

No madness of ambition, avarice, none :
 No larger feast than under plane or pine
 With neighbours laid along the grass, to
 take

Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
 Affirming each his own philosophy—
 Nothing to mar the sober majesties
 Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.

But now it seems some unseen monster lays
 His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
 Wrenching it backward into his; and
 spoils

My bliss in being; and it was not great;
 For save when shutting reasons up in
 rhythm,

Or Heliconian honey in living words,
 To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
 Tired of so much within our little life,
 Or of so little in our little life—

Poor little life that toddles half an hour
 Crown'd with a flower or two, and there
 an end—

And since the nobler pleasure seems to
 fade,

Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
 Not manlike end myself?—our privilege—
 What ~~beast~~ has heart to do it? And what
 man,

What Roman would bedragg'd in triumph
 thus?

Not I; not he, who bears one name with
 her

Whose death-blow struck the dateless
 doom of kings,

When, brooding not the Tarquin in her
 veins,

She made her blood in sight of Collatine
 And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
 Spout from the maiden fountain in her
 heart.

And from it sprung the Commonwealth,
 which breaks

As I am breaking now!

'And therefore now

Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
 Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
 Those blind beginnings that have made
 me man,

Dash them anew together at her will
 Thro' all her cycles—into man once more,
 Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower :
 But till this cosmic order everywhere
 Shatter'd into one earthquake in one day
 Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour
 perhaps

Is not so far when momentary man
 Shall seem no more a something to himself,
 But he, his hopes and hates, his homes
 and fanes,

And even his bones long laid within the
 grave,

The very sides of the grave itself shall
 pass,

Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
 Into the unseen for ever,—till that hour,
 My golden work in which I told a truth
 That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
 And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and
 plucks

The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
 Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails at
 last

And perishes as I must; for O Thou,
 Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
 Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,
 Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
 Without one pleasure and without one
 pain,

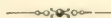
Howbeit I know thou surely must be
 mine

Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
 I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
 How roughly men may woo thee so they
 win—

Thus—thus : the soul flies out and dies in
 the air.'

With that he drove the knife into his side:
 She heard him raging, heard him fall;
 ran in,
 Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon
 herself
 As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd

That she but meant to win him back, fell
 on him,
 Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd: he answer'd,
 'Care not thou!
 Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee
 well!'



THE PRINCESS; A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's day
 Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
 Up to the people: thither flock'd at
 noon
 His tenants, wife and child, and thither
 half
 The neighbouring borough with their
 Institute
 Of which he was the patron. I was there
 From college, visiting the son,—the son
 A Walter too,—with others of our set,
 Five others: we were seven at Vivian-
 place.

And me that morning Walter show'd
 the house,
 Greek, set with busts: from vases in the
 hall
 Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than
 their names,
 Grew side by side; and on the pavement
 lay
 Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the
 park,
 Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of
 Time;
 And on the tables every clime and age

Jumbled together; celts and calumets,
 Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,
 fans
 Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
 Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
 The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-
 clubs
 From the isles of palm: and higher on
 the walls,
 Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and
 deer,
 His own forefathers' arms and armour
 hung.

And 'this' he said 'was Hugh's at
 Agincourt;
 And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon:
 A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
 With all about him'—which he brought,
 and I
 Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with
 knights,
 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and
 kings
 Who laid about them at their wills and
 died;
 And mixt with these, a lady, one that
 amid

Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the
gate,
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her
walls.

'O miracle of women,' said the book,
'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's
death,
But now when all was lost or seem'd as
lost—'

Her stature more than mortal in the burst
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire—
Broke with a blast of trumpets from the
gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses'
heels,
And some were whelm'd with missiles of
the wall,
And some were push'd with lances from
the rock,
And part were drown'd within the whirl-
ing brook :
O miracle of noble womanhood !'

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle ;
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he
said,
'To the Abbey : there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilia with the rest.' We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park : strange was the
sight to me ;
For all the sloping pasture murmur'd,
sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand
heads :
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a
font of stone

And drew, from butts of water on the
slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp : and somewhat lower
down
A man with knobs and wires and vials
fired
A cannon : Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields : and here were tele-
scopes
For azure views ; and there a group of
girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter :
round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
And shook the lilies : perch'd about the
knolls
A dozen angry models jetted steam :
A petty railway ran : a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past :
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations ; so that sport
Went hand in hand with Science ; other-
where
Pure sport : a herd of boys with clamour
bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket ; babies roll'd
about
Like tumbled fruit in grass ; and men and
maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro'
light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and over-
head
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from
end to end.

Strange was the sight and smould'ring of
 the time ;
 And long we gazed, but satiated at length
 Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-
 claspt,
 Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
 thro' one wide chasm of time and frost
 they gave
 The park, the crowd, the house ; but all
 within
 The sward was trim as any garden lawn :
 And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
 And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
 i'rom neighbour seats : and there was
 Ralph himself,
 A broken statue propt against the wall,
 As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,
 Half child half woman as she was, had
 wound
 A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
 And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
 That made the old warrior from his ivied
 nook
 glow like a sunbeam : near his tomb a
 feast
 Shone, silver-set ; about it lay the guests,
 And there we join'd them : then the
 maiden Aunt
 Took this fair day for text, and from it
 preach'd
 An universal culture for the crowd,
 And all thing great ; but we, unworthier,
 told
 Of college : he had climb'd across the
 spikes,
 And he had squeezed himself betwixt the
 bars,
 And he had breath'd the Professor's dogs ;
 and one
 Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men.
 But honeying at the whisper of a lord ;
 And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
 Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

Bar which they fill'd, above their heads
 I saw
 The feudal warrior lady-clad ; which
 brought
 My back to mind : and opening this I
 read
 Of old Sir Ralph a pageant two that rang
 With tilt and tourney ; then the tale of
 her
 That drove her foes with slaughter from
 her walls,
 And much I praised her nobleness, and
 'Where,'
 Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay
 Beside him) 'lives there such a woman
 now?'

Quick answer'd Lilia 'There are thou-
 sands now
 Such women, but convention beats them
 down :
 It is but bringing up ; no more than that :
 You men have done it : how I hate you
 all !
 Ah, were I something great ! I wish I
 were
 Some mighty poetess, I would shame you
 then,
 That love to keep us children ! O I wish
 That I were some great princess, I would
 build
 Far off from men a college like a man's,
 And I would teach them all that men are
 taught ;
 We are twice as quick !' And here she
 shook aside
 The hand that play'd the patron with her
 curls.
 And one said smiling 'Pretty were the
 sight
 If our old halls could change their sex,
 and flaunt

With prudes for proctors, dowagers for
deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden
hair.

I think they should not wear our rusty
gowns,

But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or
Ralph

Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear,
If there were many Lilies in the brood,
However deep you might embower the
nest,

Some boy would spy it.'

At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
'That's your light way; but I would make
it death
For any male thing but to peep at us.'

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she
laugh'd:

A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her,
she:

But Walter hail'd a score of names upon
her,

And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful
Puss,'

And swore he long'd at college, only
long'd,

All else was well, for she-society.

They boated and they cricketed; they
talk'd

At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;

They lost their weeks; they vex'd the souls
of deans:

They rode; they betted; made a hundred
friends,

And caught the blossom of the flying terns.

But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,
The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus he
spoke,

Part banter, part affection.

'True,' she said,
'We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd
us much.
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.'

She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for
harm,

So he with Lilia's. Daintily she shriek'd
And wrung it. 'Doubt my word again!'
he said.

'Come, listen! here is proof that you were
miss'd:

We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read;
And there we took one tutor as to read:
The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube and
square

Were out of season: never man, I think,
So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:

For while our cloisters echo'd frosty feet,
And our long walks were stript as bare as
brooms,

We did but talk you over, pledge you all
In wassail; often, like as many girls—
Sick for the hollies and the yews of home—
As many little trifling Lilies—play'd

Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,
And *what's my thought* and *when* and
where and *how*,

And often told a tale from mouth to mouth
As here at Christmas.'

She remember'd that:
A pleasant game, she thought: she liked
it more

Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.

But these—what kind of tales did men
tell men,

She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips:
And Walter nodded at me; 'He began,

The rest would follow, each in turn; and
so

We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?
what kind?

Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to
kill

Time by the fire in winter.'

'Kill him now,

The tyrant! kill him in the summer too,'

Said Lilia: 'Why not now?' the maiden
Aunt,

'Why not a summer's as a winter's tale?

A tale for summer as befits the time,

And something it should be to suit the
place

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,

Grave, solemn!'

Walter warp'd his mouth at this

To something so mock-solemn, that I
laugh'd

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,

Hid in the ruins; till the maiden Aunt

(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her
face

With colour) turn'd to me with 'As you
will;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,

Or be yourself your hero if you will.'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine' clam-
our'd he,

'And make her some great Princess, six
feet high,

Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!'

'Then follow me, the Prince,'

I answer'd, 'each be hero in his turn!

Seven and yet one, like shadows in a
dream.

Heroic seems our Princess as requisite—

But something made to suit with Time and
place,

A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,

A talk of college and of ladies' rights,

A feudal knight in silken masquerade,

And, yonder, shrieks and strange experi-
ments

For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt
them all—

This *were* a medley! we should have him
back

Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it for
us.

No matter: we will say whatever comes.

And let the ladies sing us, if they will,

From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space.'

So I began,

And the rest follow'd: and the women
sang

Between the rougher voices of the men,

Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:

And here I give the story and the songs.

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in
face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of May,

With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a girl,

For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our
house,

Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire
burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should
know

The shadow from the substance, and that
one

Should come to fight with shadows and
to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.
 And, truly, waking-dreams were, more or
 less,
 An old and strange affection of the house,
 Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven
 knows what :
 On a sudden in the midst of men and
 day,
 And while I walk'd and talk'd as hereto-
 fore,
 I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts
 And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
 Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-
 head cane,
 And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd 'cata-
 lepsy.'
 My mother pitying made a thousand
 prayers ;
 My mother was as mild as any saint,
 Half-canonized by all that look'd on her,
 So gracious was her tact and tenderness :
 But my good father thought a king a king ;
 He cared not for the affection of the house ;
 He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand
 To lash offence, and with long arms and
 hands
 Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from
 the mass
 For judgment.
 Now it chanced that I had been,
 While life was yet in bud and blade,
 betroth'd
 To one, a neighbouring Princess : she to
 me
 Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
 At eight years old ; and still from time
 to time
 Came murmurs of her beauty from the
 South,
 And of her brethren, youths of puissance ;
 And still I wore her picture by my heart,
 And one dark tress ; and all around them
 both

Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees
 about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I
 should wed,
 My father sent ambassadors with furs
 And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these
 brought back
 A present, a great labour of the loom ;
 And therewithal an answer vague as wind :
 Besides, they saw the king ; he took the
 gifts ;
 He said there was a compact ; that was
 true :
 But then she had a will ; was he to
 blame ?
 And maiden fancies ; loved to live alone
 Among her women ; certain, would not
 wed.

That morning in the presence room I
 stood
 With Cyril and with Florian, my two
 friends :
 The first, a gentleman of broken means
 (His father's fault) but given to starts and
 bursts
 Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,
 And almost my half-self, for still we moved
 Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my
 father's face
 Grow long and troubled like a rising
 moon,
 Inflamed with wrath : he started on his
 feet,
 Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,
 and rent
 The wonder of the loom thro' warp and
 woof
 From skirt to skirt ; and at the last he
 swarc

That he would send a hundred thousand
men,
And bring her in a whirlwind : then he
chew'd
The thrice-ston'd root of wrath, and
cook'd his spleen,
Communing with his captains of the war.

At last I spoke. ' My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hospi-
table :
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than
fame,
May rue the bargain made.' And Florian
said :

' I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess ; she, you
know,
Who wedded with a nobleman from
thence :
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land :
Ther' her this matter might be sifted
clean.'
And Cyril whisper'd : ' Take me with
you too.'
They, laughing ' what, if these weird
seizures come
Upon you in these halls, and no one near
To point you out the shadow from the
truth !
Take me : I'll serve you better in a strait ;
I grate on rusty hinges here : ' but ' No !'
Kear'd the rough king, ' you shall not ;
we ourself
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead
In iron gauntlets : break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and
pass:

Thro' the wild woods that hung about the
town ;
Found a still place, and pluck'd her like-
ness out ;
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying
lashed
In the green gleam of dewy-tassel'd trees :
What were those fancies ? wherefore
break her troth ?
Proud look'd the lips : but while I medi-
tated
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and
the shrieks
Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice
Went with it, ' Follow, follow, thou shalt
win.'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from
court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro' the town and half in
dread
To hear my father's clamour at our backs
With Ho ! from some bay-window shake
the night ;
But all was quiet : from the bastion'd
walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we
dropt,
And flying reach'd the frontier ; then we
crost
To a livelier land ; and so by tilth and
grange,
And vines, and blowing bosks of wilder-
ness,
We gain'd the mother-city thick with
towers,
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama ; crack'd and small
his voice,

But bland the smile that like a wrinkling
 wind
 On glassy water drove his cheek in lines ;
 A little dry old man, without a star,
 Not like a king : three days he feasted us,
 And on the fourth I spake of why we
 came,
 And my betroth'd. ' You do us, Prince,'
 he said,
 Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,
 ' All honour. We remember love our-
 selves
 In our sweet youth : there did a compact
 pass
 Long summers back, a kind of cere-
 mony—
 I think the year in which our olives fai'd.
 I would you had her, Prince, with all my
 heart,
 With my full heart : but there were
 widows here,
 Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady
 Blanche ;
 They fed her theories, in and out of place
 Maintaining that with equal husbandry
 The woman were an equal to the man.
 They harp'd on this ; with this our ban-
 quets rang ;
 Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of
 talk ;
 Nothing but this ; my very ears were hot
 To hear them : knowledge, so my daugh-
 ter held,
 Was all in all : they had but been, she
 thought,
 As children ; they must lose the child,
 assume
 The woman : then, Sir, awful odes she
 wrote,
 Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,
 But all she is and does is awful ; odes
 About this losing of the child ; and rhyme
 And dismal lyrics, prophesying change

Beyond all reason : these the women
 sang ;
 And they that know such things—I sought
 but peace ;
 No critic I—would call them master-
 pieces :
 They master'd me. At last she begg'd a
 boon,
 A certain summer-palace which I have
 Hard by your father's frontier : I said no,
 Yet being an easy man, gave it : and
 there,
 All wild to found an University
 For maidens, on the spur she fled ; and
 more
 We know not,—only this : they see no
 men,
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look
 upon her
 As on a kind of paragon ; and I
 (Pardon me saying it) were much loth to
 breed
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine : but
 since
 (And I confess with right) you think me
 bound
 In some sort, I can give you letters to
 her ;
 And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your
 chance
 Almost at naked nothing.'
 Thus the king ;
 And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to
 slur
 With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
 Our formal compact, yet, not less (all
 frets
 But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
 Went forth again with both my friends.
 We rode
 Many a long league back to the North.
 At last

From hills, that look'd across a land of
hope,

We dropt with evening on a rustic tower
Set in a gloaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties ;

There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine
host

To council, plied him with his richest
wines,

And show'd the late-writ letters of the king,

He with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble ; then ex-
claim'd

Averting it was clear against all rules
For any man to go : but as his brain
Began to mellow, 'If the king,' he said,
'Had given us letters, was he bound to
speak ?

The king would bear him out ;' and at
the last—

The summer of the vine in all his veins—
'No doubt that we might make it worth
his while.

She once had past that way ; he heard
her speak ;

She scared him ; life ! he never saw the
like ;

She look'd as grand as doomsday and as
grave :

And he, he reverence'd his liege-lady
there ;

He always made a point to post with
mares ;

His daughter and his housemaid were the
boys :

The land, he understood, for miles about
Was till'd by women : all the sowing was
sows,

And all the dogs'—

But while he jested thus,
A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed
in act,

Remembering how we three presented
Mail

Or Nymphe, or Goddess, at high tide of
feast,

In masque or pageant at my father's
court.

We sent mine host to purchase female
gear ;

He brought it, and himself, a sight to
shake

The midriff of despair with laughter, help
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes
We rustled : him we gave a costly bribe
To guerdon silence, mounted our good
steeds,

And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,
And rode till midnight when the college
lights

Began to glitter firefly-like in copse
And linden alley : then we past an arch,
Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings
From four wing'd horses dark against the
stars :

And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow : farther on we gain'd
A little street half garden and half house ;
But scarce could hear each other speak
for noise

Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers
falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and stir
Of fountains spouted up and showering
down

In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,
Hapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two square lamps blazon'd like Heaven
and Earth

With constellation and with continent,

Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
 A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable
 wench
 Came running at the call, and help'd us
 down.
 Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and
 sail'd,
 Full-blown, before us into rooms which
 gave
 Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost:
 In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this,
 And who were tutors. 'Lady Blanche'
 she said,
 'And Lady Psyche.' 'Which was
 prettiest,
 Best-natured?' 'Lady Psyche.' 'Hers
 are we,'
 One voice, we cried; and I sat down and
 wrote,
 In such a hand as when a field of corn
 Bows all its ears before the roaring
 East;

'Three ladies of the Northern empire
 pray
 Your Highness would enroll them with
 your own,
 As Lady Psyche's pupils.'

This I seal'd:

The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
 And raised the blinding bandage from his
 eyes:
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
 And then to bed, where half in doze I
 seem'd
 To float about a glimmering night, and
 watch
 A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight,
 swell
 On some dark shore just seen that it was
 rich.

11.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears.
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears!
 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

At break of day the College Portress
 came:
 She brought us Academic silks, in hue
 The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
 And zoned with gold; and now when
 these were on,
 And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,
 She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know
 The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,
 I first, and following thro' the porch that
 sang
 All round with laurel, issued in a court
 Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with
 lengths
 Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
 Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of
 flowers.
 The Muses and the Graces, group'd in
 threes,
 Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst;
 And here and there on lattice edges lay
 Or book or lute; but hastily we past,
 And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper sat,
 With two tame leopards couch'd beside
 her throne
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,
 The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
 Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,

Thou out man's earth; such eyes were in
 her head,
 And so much grace and power, breathing
 down
 From over her arch'd brows, with every
 turn
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long
 hands,
 And to her feet. She rose her sight,
 and said:

'We give you welcome: not without
 rebound
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,
 The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,
 And that full voice which circles round
 the grave,
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
 What! are the ladies of your land so tall?'
 'We of the court' said Cyril. 'From
 the court'
 She answer'd, 'then ye know the Prince?'
 and he:
 'The climax of his age! as tho' there were
 One rose in all the world, your Highness
 that,
 He worships your ideal:' she replied:
 'We scarcely thought in our own hall to
 hear
 This barren verbiage, current among men,
 Light even the tassel-dink of compliments.
 Your flight from out your bookless wifely
 would seem
 As arguing love of knowledge and of
 power;
 Your language proves you still the child!
 Indeed,
 We dream not of him: when we set our
 hand
 To this great work, we purposed with
 ourself
 Never to wed. You likewise will do well,
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling

The tricks, which make us toys of men,
 that is,
 Some future time, if so indeed you will,
 You may wish those artful toys but imis-
 ally
 Your fortunes, justlier bestowed, scale
 with scale.'

At those high words, we conscious of
 ourselves,
 Perused the matting; then an officer
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such—
 these:
 Not for three years to correspond with
 home;
 Not for three years to cross the Liberties;
 Not for three years to speak with any
 men;
 And many more, which hastily subscribed,
 We enter'd on the boards: and 'Now,'
 she cried,
 'Ye are green wood, see ye warp not!
 Look, our hall!
 Our statutes!—not of those that men
 desire,
 Sleek Odaliques, or oracles of mode,
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East; but
 she
 That taught the Sabine how to rule, and
 she
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Paganore
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman
 lines
 Of Agrippina. Lowell with these, and low
 Conventou, since to look on noble forms
 Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism
 That which is higher. O lift your natures
 up:
 Embrace our aims: work out your free-
 dom. Glad!

Knowledge is now no more a fountain
seal'd :

Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not benoble. Leave us : you may go :
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before ;
For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive.'

She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal : back again we crost the court
To Lady Psyche's : as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forms, like morning
doves

That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
A patient range of pupils ; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-
eyed,

And on the hither side, or so she look'd,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,
Aglaua slept. We sat : the Lady
glanced :

Then Florian, but no livelier than the
dame

That whisper'd 'Asses' ears,' among the
sedge,

'My sister.' 'Comely, too, by all that's
fair,'

Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she
began.

'This world was once a fluid haze of
light,

Till toward the centre set the starry
tides,

And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast
The planets : then the monster, then the
man ;

Too'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,

Raw from the prime, and crushing down
his mate ;

As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here
Among the lowest.'

Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious past ;
Glanced at the legendary Amazon
As emblematic of a nobler age ;
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of
those

That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo ;
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman
lines

Of empire, and the woman's state in each,
How far from just ; till warming with her
theme

She fulminated out her scorn of laws Salique
And little-footed China, touch'd on Maho-
met

With much contempt, and came to
chivalry :

When some respect, however slight, was
paid

To woman, superstition all awry :
However then commenced the dawn : a
beam

Had slanted forward, fallen in a land
Of promise ; fruit would follow. Deep,
indeed,

Their debt of thanks to her who first had
dared

To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert
None lordlier than themselves but that
which made

Woman and man. She had founded ;
they must build.

Here might they learn whatever men were
taught :

Let them not fear : some said their heads
were less :

Some men's were small ; not they the
least of men ;

For often fitness compensated size :
Besides the brain was like the hand, and
grew

With using ; thence the man's, if none
was more ;

He took advantage of his strength to be
First in the field : some ages had been lost :
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life
Was longer ; and albeit their glorious
names

Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in
truth

The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the
glebe,

But Homer, Plato, Verulam ; even so
With woman : and in arts of government
Elizabeth and others ; arts of war
The peasant Joan and others ; arts of
grace

Sappho and others vied with any man :
And, last not least, she who had left her
place,

And bow'd her state to them, that they
might grow

To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the
blight

Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy
Dilating on the future ; ' everywhere
Two heads in council, two beside the
hearth,

Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,

Two plummet dropt for one to sound the
abyss

Of science, and the secrets of the mind :
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more :
And everywhere the broad and hominious
hearth

Should bear a double growth of those rare
souls,

Poets, whose thought enrich the blood of
the world.'

She ended here, and bestow'd us : the
rest

Parted ; and, glowing full-faced welcome,
she

Began to address us, and was moving on
In gratulation, till as when a boat
Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her
voice

Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she
cried

' My brother ! ' ' Well, my sister. ' ' O,
she said,

' What do you here ? and in this dress ?
and these ?

Why who are these ? a wolf within the
fold !

A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gracious
to me !

A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all !'

' No plot, no plot,' he answer'd,
' Wretched boy,

How saw you not the inscription on the
gate,

LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF
DEATH ?'

' And if I had,' he answer'd, ' who could
think

The softer Adams of your Academe,

O sister, stress that they be, were such

As chanted on the blanching bones of
men ?'

' But you will find it otherwise,' she said.

' You jest : ill jesting with oldenheads ;
my vow

Binds me to speed, and O that iron will

That axlike edge untornside, our Head,

The Princess.' ' Well then, Psyche, take
my life,

And nail me like a weasel on a grange
 For warning : bury me beside the gate,
 And cut this epitaph above my bones ;
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
 All for the common good of womankind.*
 ' Let me die too,' said Cyril, ' having seen
 And heard the Lady Psyche.'

I struck in :
 ' Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the
 truth ;
 Receive it ; and in me behold the Prince
 Your countryman, affianced years ago
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she was,
 And thus (what other way was left) I
 came.'
 ' O Sir, O Prince, I have no country ;
 none ;
 If any, this ; but none. What'er I was
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
 Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not
 breathe
 Within this vestal limit, and how should I,
 Who am not mine, say, live : the thunder-
 bolt
 Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ; it
 falls.'
 ' Yet pause,' I said : ' for that inscription
 there,
 I think no more of deadly lurks therein,
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
 To scare the fowl from fruit : if more there
 be,
 If more and acted on, what follows? war ;
 Your own work marr'd : for this your
 Academe,
 Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo
 Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
 With all fair theories only made to gild
 A stormless summer.' ' Let the Princess
 judge
 Of that,' she said : ' farewell, Sir—and to
 you.
 I shed her at the sequel, but I go.

' Are you that Lady Psyche,' I rejoin'd,
 ' The fifth in line from that old Florian,
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he
 fell,
 And all else fled : we point to it, and we
 say,
 The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
 But branches current yet in kindred veins.'
 ' Are you that Psyche,' Florian added ;
 ' she
 With whom I sang about the morning
 hills,
 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple
 fly,
 And snared the squirrel of the glen? are
 you
 That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing
 brow,
 To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming
 draught
 Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
 My sickness down to happy dreams? are
 you
 Th brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
 You were that Psyche, but what are you
 now?'
 ' You are that Psyche,' Cyril said, ' for
 whom
 I would be that for ever which I seem,
 Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
 And glean your scatter'd sapience.'
 Then once more,
 ' Are you that Lady Psyche,' I began,
 ' That on her bridal morn before she part
 From all her old companions, when the
 king
 Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that
 ancient ties
 Would still be dear beyond the southern
 hills ;

That were there any of our people there
 In want or pain, there was one to hear
 And help them ! look ! for such are these
 and I.'

'Are you that Psyche,' Florian ask'd,
 'to whom,
 In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
 Came flying while you sat beside the well ?
 The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,
 And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and
 the blood
 Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you
 wept.
 That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet
 you wept.
 O by the bright head of my little niece,
 You were that Psyche, and what are you
 now ?'
 'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said again,
 'The mother of the sweetest little maid,
 That ever crow'd for kisses.'

'Out upon it !'

She answer'd, 'peace ! and why should I
 not play
 The Spartan Mother with emotion, be
 The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind ?
 Him you call great : he for the common
 weal,
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,
 As I might slay this child, if good need
 were,
 Slew both his sons : and I, shall I, on
 whom
 The secular emancipation turns
 Of half this world, be swerved from right
 to save
 A prince, a brother ? a little will I yield.
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well for
 you.
 O hard, when love and duty clash ! I fear
 My conscience will not count me fleck-
 less : yet—
 Hear my conditions : promise (otherwise

You perish) as you came, to slip away
 To-day, to-morrow, soon : it shall be said,
 These women were too barbarous, would
 not learn ;
 They fled, who might have shamed us :
 promise, all.'

What could we else, we promised
 each ; and she,
 Like some wild creature newly-caged,
 commenced
 A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
 By Florian ; holding out her lily arms
 Took both his hands, and smiling faintly
 said :
 'I knew you at the first : tho' you have
 grown
 You scarce have alter'd : I am sad and
 glad
 To see you, Florian. I give thee to death
 My brother ! it was duty spoke, not I.
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.
 Our mother, is she well ?'

With that she kiss'd
 His forehead, then, a moment after, clung
 About him, and betwixt them blossom'd
 up
 From out a common vein of memory
 Sweet household talk, and phrases of the
 hearth,
 And far allusion, till the gracious dew
 Began to glisten and to fall : and while
 They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a
 voice,
 'I brought a message here from Lady
 Blanche.'
 Back started she, and turning round we
 saw
 The Lady Blanche's daughter where she
 stood,
 Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
 A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
 That clad her like an April daffodilly

(Her mother's colour) with her lips apart,
And all her thoughts as fair within her
eyes.

As bottom agates seen to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the
door.

Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah—Melissa—you!
You heard us?' and Melissa, 'O pardon
me

I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,
Nor think I bear that heart within my
breast,

To give three gallant gentlemen to death.'
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we two
Were always friends, none closer, elm
and vine:

But yet your mother's jealous tempera-
ment—

Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,
or prove

The Danaid of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
My honour, these their lives. 'Ah, fear
me not'

Replied Melissa; 'no—I would not tell.
No, not for all Aspasias cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those
hard things

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.'
'Be it so' the other, 'that we still may
lead

The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet.'

Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
(Tho' madam *you* should answer, *we*
would ask)

Less welcome find among us, if you came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,

Myself for something more.' He said
not what,

But 'Thanks,' she answer'd 'Go: we
have been too long

Together: keep your hoods about the
face;

They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little; mix not with the rest; and
hold

Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be
well.'

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the
child,

And held her round the knees against his
waist,

And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and
the child

Push'd her flat hand against his face and
laugh'd;

And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd

For half the day thro' stately theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat,
we heard

The grave Professor. On the lecture slate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration: follow'd
then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-
long

That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame, the
rock,

The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the
flower,

Eleetie, chemie laws, and all the rest,
 And whatsoever can be taught and known;
 Till like three horses that have broken
 fence,
 And glutt'd all night long breast-sleep in
 corn,
 We issued gorged with knowledge, and I
 spoke:

'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we.'
 'They hunt old trails' said Cyril 'very
 well;

But when did woman ever yet invent?'
 'Ungracious!' answer'd Florian; 'have
 you learnt

No more from Psyche's lecture, you that
 talk'd

The trash that made me sick, and almost
 sad?'

'O trash' he said, 'but with a kernel in it.
 Should I not call her wise, who made me
 wise?

And learnt? I learnt more from her in a
 flash.

Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
 And every Muse tumbled a science in.

A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
 And round them balls & thimble-baby
 brows.

Fly twanging headless arrows at the
 hearts.

Whence follows many a vacant pang;
 but O

With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
 The Head of all the golden-shafted firm.

The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too;
 He siek' me thro' the stomach: and now

What think you of it, Florian? do I chase
 The substance or the shadow? will it hold?

I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
 No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I

Flatter myself that always everywhere
 I know the substance when I see it.

Well,

Are castles shadows? Three of them?

Is she

The sweet proprietress a shadow? If not,
 Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd
 coat?

For dear are those three castles to my
 wants,

And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
 And two dear things are one of double
 worth,

And much I might have said, but that
 my zone

Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O to
 hear

The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty
 plants

Imbibing! once or twice I thought to
 roar,

To break my chain, to shake my mane:
 but thou.

Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!
 Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my
 throat;

Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
 Star-sisters answering under crescent
 brows;

Abate the stride, which speaks of man,
 and loose

A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
 Where they like swallows coming out of
 time

Will wonder why they came: but hark
 the bell

For dinner, let us go!

And in we stream'd

Among the columns, pacing staid and still
 By twos and threes, till all from end to
 end

With beauties every shade of brown and
 fair

In colour ~~gay~~ than the morning mist,
 The long hall glitter'd like a bed of
 flowers.

How might a man not wander from his
wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept
mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious
dreams,
The second-sight of some Astræan age,
Sat compass'd with professors : they, the
while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro :
A clamour thicken'd, mixt with inmost
terms
Of art and science : Lady Blanche alone
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat
In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens :
there

One walk'd reciting by herself, and one
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down
with that :
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat : some hid
and sought
In the orange thickets : others tost a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter : others lay about the
lawns,
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that
their May
Was passing : what was learning unto
them ?
They wish'd to marry : they could rule a
house ;
Men hated learned women : but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates ; and often
came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,

That harm'd not : then day droopt ; the
chapel bells
Call'd us : we left the walks ; we mixt
with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to
wall,
While the great organ almost burst his
pipes,
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the
court
A long melodious thunder to the sound
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from
Heaven
A blessing on her labours for the world.

III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea.
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea !
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me ;
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps.
Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon :
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
sleep.

MORN in the white wake of the morning
star

Came furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other drest with
care

Descended to the courts that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were
touch'd

Above the darkness from their native East

There while we stood beside the fount,
and watch'd
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble,
approach'd
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of
sleep,
O'erglanc'd, and glancing round her dewy eyes
The smiling Iris of a right of man;
'And fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet
you may!
My mother knows!' and when I ask'd
her 'how,'
'My fault!' she wept 'my fault! and yet
not mine;
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon
me.
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to
night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
She says the Princess should have been
the Head,
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;
And so it was agreed when first they
came;
The Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
And she the left, or rest, or seldom used;
Half more than half the students, all the
love,
And so last night she fell to canvass you:
She canvass'd me! she will not envy her.
'Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls?—more like men!' and at these
words the snake,
My secret, warn'd, no air within my
bosom;
And oh, Strs, could I help it, but my
cheek
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye
To fix and make me hoar, till she
laugh'd:
'O unreasonably maiden, you!
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had
been men

You need not set your thoughts in riddle
thus
For wholesale comment." Then, I am
shamed
That I must needs repeat for my excuse—
What books so little ground: "that"
[for still
My mother went revolving on the word)
"And so they are,—very like men in-
deed—
And with that woman (I never) for hours!"
Then came these dreadful words out one
by one,
"Why—these—*men*—men!" I shudder'd:
"and you know it."
"O ask me nothing," I said: "And she
knows too,
And she conceals it." So my mother
clutch'd
The truth at once, but with no word from
me;
And now thus only risen she goes to
inform
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be
crush'd;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore
fly:
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.'

'What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a
blush?'
Said Cyril: 'Pale one, blush again:
than wear
Those fumes, better blanch our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in
Heaven'
He added, 'lest some classic Angel speak
In scorn of us, "They mock'd, Gossy-
moes,
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn."
But I will melt this curdle into wax
To yield us farther furlough:' and he
went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought
 He scarce would prosper. 'Tell us,'
 Florian ask'd,
 'How grew this feud betwixt the right
 and left.'
 'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these
 two
 Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my
 mother,
 Too jealous, often fretful as the wind
 Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:
 I never knew my father, but she say
 (God help her) she was wedded to a fool;
 And still she rail'd against the state of
 things.
 She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,
 And from the Queen's decease she brought
 her up.
 But when your sister came she won the
 heart
 Of Ida: they were still together, grew
 (For so they said themselves) inosculated;
 Consonant chords that shiver to one note;
 One mind in all things: yet my mother
 still
 Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,
 And juggled with them for her papil-
 love:
 She calls her plagiarist; I know not
 what:
 But I must go: I dare not tarry,' and
 light,
 As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.
 Then murrur'd Florian gazing after
 her,
 An open hearted maiden, true and pure,
 If I could love, why this were she: how
 pretty
 Her blushing was, and how she blush'd
 again,
 As if to close with Cyril's random wish:

Not like your Princess cram'd with
 erring pride,
 Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in
 tow.'

'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of
 the crane,
 The dove may murmur of the dove, but I
 An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.
 My princess, O my princess! true she
 errs,
 But in her own grand way: being herself
 Three times more noble than three score
 of men,
 She sees herself in every woman else,
 And so she wears her error like a crown
 To blind the truth and me: for her, and
 her,
 Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
 The nectar; but--ah she--whene'er she
 moves
 The Samian Herè rises and she speaks
 A Memnon smitten with the morning
 Sun.'

So saying from the court we paced, and
 gain'd
 The terrace ranged along the Northern
 front,
 And leaning there on those balusters, high
 Above the empurpled champaign, drank
 the gale
 That blown about the foliage underneath
 And sated with the innumerable rose,
 Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came
 Cyril, and yawning 'O hard task,' he
 cried;
 'No fighting shadows here! I forced a
 way
 Their solid opposition crabb'd and
 gnarl'd.
 Better to clear prime forests, heave and
 thump

A lounge of steel: his summer robes close,
 Than hammer at this reverend gentleman.
 I knock'd and knock'd, till I could find her there
 At point to move, and settled in her eyes
 The green and glaucous flight of coming storm.
 So, I was courteous, every phrase well-said,
 As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I pray'd
 One question: she demanded who we were,
 And why we came? I falter'd nothing fair,
 But, your example pilot, told her all.
 Up went the husband amaze of hand and eye,
 But when I dwelt upon your old affiance,
 She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray.
 I urged the fierce inscription on the gate,
 And our three lives. True—we had three ourselves.
 With open eyes, and we must take the chance.
 But such extremes, I told her, well might harm
 The woman's cause. "Not more than now," she said,
 "So puffed as it is with favouritism."
 I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall
 Melting, knowing, saying not she knew:
 Her answer was "Leave me to deal with that."
 I spoke of war to come and many battles,
 And she replied, her duty was to speak,
 And duty duty, that of course, was mine.
 I grew discouraged, Sir; for since I knew
 No such or hard but that a little woe
 May last a million in a thousand years,

I recommenc'd: "Doubt not, one year
 I find you have but in the second place,
 Since by the third—the authentic standard—
 I still hold it: we will send you highest:
 With it our talent: help my prince to gain
 His rightful throne, and here I present you
 Some palace in our land, where you shall reign
 The head and heart of all our fair she-
 world,
 And your great name flow on with broad-
 ening time
 For ever." Well, she balanced this a
 little,
 And told me she would answer us to-day,
 Meantime be mute: thus much, nor more
 I gamed.'

He ceasing, came a message from the
 Hood.
 "The afternoon for Princess rule is nigh:
 The sign of certain strat to the North,
 Would we go with her: we should find
 the land
 Worth seeing; and the river made a fall
 Our journey: then she pointed on to
 where
 A double hill set up his towers high:
 Beyond the third leaved juniper of the vale.

Agreed to, that the day does not draw
 all
 In range of duties to the appointed hour.
 Then summon'd to the porch we went.
 She stood
 Among her maids, higher by the head,
 Her back against a pillar, her face on one
 Of those same leopard. Kalmuck-like he
 said

And paw'd about her sandal. I drew
near;

I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure
came:

Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-fur'd cat—a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty
masks,

And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet I
felt:

My heart beat thick with passion and with
awe:

'Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
Broke, as she smote me with the light of
eyes

That lent my knee desire to kneel, and
shook

My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:
'O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us
not

Too harsh to your companion yesternorn;
Unwillingly we spake.' 'No—not to
her,'

I answer'd, 'but to one of whom we spake
Your Highness might have seem'd the
thing you say.'

'Again?' she cried, 'are you ambassa-
dresses

From him to me? we give you, being
strange,

A license: speak, and let the topic die.'

I stammer'd that I knew him—could I
have wish'd—

'Our king expects—was there no precon-
tract?

There is no truer-hearted—ah, you seem

All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but
long'd

To follow: surely, if your Highness keep
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to
death,

Or baser courses, children of despair.'

'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not read
—no books?

Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor deals
in that

Which men delight in, martial exercise?

To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a
girl;

As girls were once, as we ourself have
been:

We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt
with them:

We touch on our dead self, nor shun to
do it,

Being other—since we learnt our meaning
here,

To lift the woman's fall'n divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man.'

She paused, and added with a
haughtier smile

'And as to precontracts, we move, my
friend,

At no man's beck, but know ourself and
thee,

O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out
She kept her state, and left the drunken
king

To brawl at Shushan underneath the
palms.'

'Alas your Highness breathes full
East,' I said,

'On that which leans to you. I know
the Prince,

I prize his truth : and then how vast a
work

To assail this gray preëminence of man !

You grant me license ; might I use it ?
think ;

Are half in some perelature your life may
fall ;

Then comes the fabled mistress of your
plan,

And takes and ruins all ; and thus your
plans

May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice
Resmooth to nothing : might I dread that
you,

With only Fame for spouse and your great
deeds

For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
Meanwhile, what every woman counts her
due,

Love, children, happiness ?'

And she exclaim'd,

'Peace, you young savage of the Northern
wild !

What ! tho' your Prince's love were like
a fire,

Have we not made ourself the sacrifice ?
You are told instead : we are not talk'd
to thus !

Yet will we say for children, would they
grow

Like field-flowers, everywhere ! we like
them well :

But children die ; and let me tell you, girl,
However you babble, great deeds cannot
die ;

They with the sun and moon renew their
light

Forever, blessing those that live on them.

Children—that men may pluck them from
our hearts,

Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—
O—children—there is nothing upon earth

More miserable than she that has a son
And sees him err : nor would we work
for fame :

Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause
of Great,

Who learns the one POU STO whence after-
hands

May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little : wherefore up and act, non-shrink,

For fear our solid aim be dissipated
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we
had been,

In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and
watch

The sandy footprint harden into stone.'

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand
Imaginations might at all be won.

And she look'd out interpreting my
thoughts ;

'No doubt we seem a kind of monster
to you :

We are used to that : for women, up till
this

Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle
taboo,

Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
In high science, they know not, cannot
guess—

How much their welfare is dependent on us.
If we could give them surer, quicker
proof—

Oh if our end were less achievable
By slow approach, than by single act
Of immolation, any phase of death,
We were as prompt to spring against the
piles,

Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
To compass our dear sisters' liberties.'

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear ;
 And up we came to where the river sloped
 To plunge in cataract, shattering on black
 blocks
 A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the
 woods,
 And danced the colour, and, below, stuck
 out
 The bones of some vast bulk that lived
 and roar'd
 Before man was. She gazed awhile and
 said,
 'As these rude bones to us, are we to her
 That will be.' 'Dare we dream of that,'
 I ask'd,
 'Which wrought us, as the workman and
 his work,
 That practice betters?' 'How,' she
 cried, 'you love
 The metaphysics ! read and earn our prize,
 A golden brooch : beneath an emerald
 plane
 Sits Diotima, teaching him that died
 Of hemlock ; our device ; wrought to the
 life ;
 She rapt upon her subject, he on her :
 For there are schools for all.' 'And yet ?'
 I said
 Methinks I have not found among them
 all
 One anatomic.' 'Nay, we thought of that,'
 She answer'd, 'but it pleased us not : in
 truth
 We shudder but to dream our maids
 should ape
 Those monstrous males that carve the
 living hound,
 And cram him with the fragments of the
 grave,
 Or in the dark dissolving human heart,
 And holy secrets of this microcosm,
 Dabbling a shameless hand with shame-
 ful jest,

Encarnalize their spirits : yet we know
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter
 hangs :
 Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,
 Nor willing men should come among us,
 learnt,
 For many weary moons before we came,
 This craft of healing. Were you sick,
 ourself
 Would tend upon you. To your question
 now,
 Which touches on the workman and his
 work.
 Let there be light and there was light :
 'tis so :
 For was, and is, and will be, are but is ;
 And all creation is one act at once,
 The birth of light : but we that are not all,
 As parts, can see but parts, now this, now
 that,
 And live, perforce, from thought to
 thought, and make
 One act a phantom of succession : thus
 Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow,
 Time ;
 But in the shadow will we work, and
 mould
 The woman to the fuller day.'
 She spake
 With kindled eyes : we rode a league
 beyond,
 And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing,
 came
 On flowery levels underneath the crag,
 Full of all beauty. 'O how sweet' I said
 (For I was half-oblivious of my mask)
 'To linger here with one that loved us.'
 'Yea,'
 She answer'd, 'or with fair philosophies
 That lift the fancy ; for indeed these fields
 Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,
 Where paced the Demigods of old, and
 saw

The sil white vapours and the crowned
 rivers

led to the Sea : then, turning to her
 gentle,

'Lift our pavilion here upon the sword ;
 Lay out the vains.' At the word, they
 raised

A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
 With fair Corinna's triumph ; here she
 stood,

Engirt with many a florid maiden-sweat,
 The ~~companion~~ ; woman-companion
 there

The laurel'd Victor of ten-thousand
 hymns,

And all the men mourn'd at his side : but we
 sat forth to climb ; then, climbing, Cyril
 kept

With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
 With mine affianced. Many a little hand
 Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the
 rocks,

Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
 In the dark crag ; and then we turn'd,
 we wound

Around the cliffs, the cypresses, out and in,
 Humming and clinking, chattering stony
 masses

Of beds and boulders, rag and rock,
 and tuff,

Asygmatite, and trachyte, till the Sea
 Grew purple towards his death and fell,
 and all

The ray lights came out above the
 beams.

IV.

The splendour falls on the walls,

And many a window will be busy :

The long light shales across the lake,

And the wild ocean lingers by glory.

How, hush, how, see the wild echoes dying,

How, hush, answer, when, dying, dying,
 rising.

to leave the land, how they can grow,

And answer, answer, answer, going,

Of wood and the trees, still and still,

The leaves of the trees, the leaves of the trees,

How, hush, how, see the wild echoes dying,

How, hush, answer, when, dying, dying,

rising.

to leave the land, how they can grow,

They faint on hill or field or river :

Our voices will be heard to come,

And grow for good and better.

How, hush, how, see the wild echoes dying,

And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

'THERE sinks the nebulous star we call
 the Sun,

If that hypothesis of theirs be sound'

Said Ida ; 'let us down and rest ;' and we
 Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,
 pieces,

By every cypress-father'd chasm and
 cleft,

Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where
 below

No bigger than a gnat-worm, hangs the tent
 Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean'd
 on me,

Descending ; once or twice she laid her
 hand,

And blissful palpitations in the blood,
 Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted her feet, and laid
 beneath us with them, and enter'd in,
 Those leading deep to brother'd down we
 and

Our ethanol : on a tripod in the midst
 A fragrant fennel rose, and before us glow'd
 Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and
 gold.

Then she, 'Let some one sing to us :
 lighten us'

The minutes fledged with music : ' and a
 maid,

Of those beside her, smote her harp, and
sang,

‘Tears, idle tears, I know not what
they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine
despair

Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

‘Fresh as the first beam glittering on a
sail,
That brings our friends up from the under-
world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the
verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

‘Ah, sad and strange as in dark sum-
mer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken’d birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering
square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no
more.

‘Dear as remember’d kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy
feign’d
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
O Death in Life, the days that are no
more.’

She ended with such passion that the
tear,
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring
pearl
Lost in her bosom : but with some dis-
dain

Answer’d the Princess, ‘If indeed there
haunt

About the moulder’d lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears with
wool

And so pace by : but thine are fancies
hatch’d

In silken-folded idleness ; nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be,
While down the streams that float us each
and all

To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of
ice,

Throne after throne, and molten on the
waste

Becomes a cloud : for all things serve
their time

Toward that great year of equal might
and rights,

Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the
end

Found golden : let the past be past ; let be
Their cancell’d Babels : tho’ the rough
kex break

The starr’d mosaic, and the beard-blown
goat

Hang on the shaft, and the wild figtree
split

Their monstrous idols, care not while we
hear

A trumpet in the distance pealing news
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle,
burns

Above the unrisen morrow :’ then to me ;
‘ Know you no song of your own land,’
she said,

‘Not such as moans about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance and the
hues

Of promise ; not a death’s-head at the
wine.’

Then I remember'd once myself had
made,
What time I watch'd the swallow winging,
south
From mine own land, part made long
since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

'O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying
South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded
eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

'O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest
each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the
South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

'O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow,
and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million
loves.

'O were I then that she might take me
in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

'Why lingereth she to clothe her heart
with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are
green?

'O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is
blown ;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is
made.

'O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And loe of the sun of summer in the North,
And loe of the moon of beauty in the
South.

'O Swallow, flying from the golden
woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and
make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.'

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with
alien lips,
And knew not what they meant ; for still
my voice
Rang false : but smiling ' Not for thee,'
she said,

'O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil : marsh-divers, rather,
maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-
crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass : and
this
A true love-poem ! O for such, my friend,
We hold them slight : they mind us of
the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves
are men,

That lute and flute fantastic tenor-men,
And dress the victim to the offering up,
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,
And play the slave to gain the beauty.
Poor soul ! I had a maid of honour once ;
She wept her true eyes blind for such a
one,

A name of common and second-hand,
I loved her, I woo'd her with her. She is
dead.

So they blaspheme the name ! But great
is song

Useful to great ends; and out of love of art
 (1761)

Vallanrian hymns, or like rhythmic love
 (1762)

The passion of the prophetic; for song
 Is drier unto freedom, force and growth
 Of spirit than to junketing and love.

Love is it? Would this were meek-love,
 and this

Meek-Hymns were I'dd up the winter
 hats,

Till all the green be taken at our worth.
 Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
 To be dandled, no, but living wills, and
 (1763)

Whole in ourselves and owed to none.
 Enough!

But now to heaven play with profit, you,
 Know you no song, the true growth of
 your soil,

That gives the manners of your country-
 women?

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous
 head with eyes

Of shining expectation fixt on mine.

Then while I droop'd my brains for such
 a song,

Cyril, with whom the ball-moath's play
 had wrought,

Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
 To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
 Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
 Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at
 him,

I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wann'd
 and droop'd;

The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;
 'Forbear,' the Princess cried; 'Forbear,
 sit I;

And hastet thro' and thro' with wrath
 and joys.

I smote him on the breast; he started up;

There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
 Melissa clamour'd 'Flee the death!' 'To
 horse'

Said Ida; 'home! to horse!' and fled, as
 flies

A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,
 When some one batters at the dovecote-
 doors,

Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
 With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,
 In the pavilion: there like parting hopes
 I heard them passing from me: hoof by
 hoof,

And every hoof a knell to my desires,
 Clang'd on the bridge; and then another
 shriek,

'The Head, the Head, the Princess, O
 the Head!'

For blind with rage she miss'd the plank,
 and roll'd

In the river. Out I sprang from glow to
 gloom:

There whirl'd her white robe like a
 blossom'd branch

Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I gave,
 No more; but woman-vested as I was
 Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I
 caught her; then

Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
 The weight of all the hopes of half the
 world,

Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
 Was half-disrooted from his place and
 stoop'd

To drench his dark locks in the gurgling
 wave

Mid-channel. Right on this we drove
 and caught,

And grasping down the boughs I gain'd
 the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly
 group'd

In the hollow bank. One reeling
Forward drew

My careless from mine arms; they cried
"O'er lives!"

They bore her back into the tent: but I,
So much a kind of shame within me
wrought,

Not yet embold to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone
on foot

(For soon her horse was lost I left her
mine)

Across the woods, and less from Indian
craft.

From beelike instinct hiveward, found at
length

The garden portals. Two great statues,
Art

And Science. Caryatids, lifed up

A weight of emblem, and betwixt were
valves

Of open-work in which the hunter rued
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon
Spread out at top, and grandly spiced the
globe.

A little space was left between the boots,
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with
pain,

Dropt on the sward, and up the ladder
walk'd.

And, lost on thought—thus changed from
hue to hue,

Now pring on the glasswork, now glass-
saw.

I pass'd the terrace, till the bear had
wheel'd

Thro' a great arc full seven fathoms.

A step
Of lightest color, then a loftier form

Than female, moving thro' the uncertain
glow,

Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this were
she,"

But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist," he
said,

"They seek us: out we lose a lot of rales.
Moreover "seize the strangers" is the cry.
How came you here?" I told him: "I"
said he,

"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart,
return'd.

Arriving all confused among the rest
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath
The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all,
Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.

She, question'd if she knew us men, at first
Was silent: closer press'd, denied it not:
And then, demand'd if her mother knew,
On Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:
From whence the Royal child, familiar
with her,

Easily gather'd either guilt. She went
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd
For Psyche's child to cast it from the
stairs;

She sent for Blanche to scold her face to
face;

And I slip't out: but whither will you now?
And where are Psyche, Cypil? Justly are
lost:

What, if forgotten! that were not so well.
Would rather we had known our end! I trust
His wildness, and the chances of the lock."

"And yet! I said," you terr'd him more
than I

"That mark him! this is proper to the
clown.

"You, trank'd, or bang'd and purple, still
lie down,

To harm the thing that trusts him, and to
 shame
 That which he says he loves : for Cyril,
 howe'er
 He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song
 Might have been worse and sinn'd in
 grosser lips
 Beyond all parlon—as it is, I hold
 These flashes on the surface are not he.
 He has a solid base of temperament :
 But as the waterlily starts and slides
 Upon the level in little puffs of wind,
 Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he.'

Screee had I ceased when from a
 tamarisk near
 Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,
 'Names :'
 He, standing still, was clutch'd ; but I
 began
 To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind
 And double in and out the boles, and race
 By all the fountains : fleet I was of foot :
 Before me shower'd the rose in flakes ;
 behind
 I heard the puff'd pursuer ; at mine ear
 Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,
 And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
 At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
 That clasp'd the feet of a Mnemosyne,
 And falling on my face was caught and
 known.

They haled us to the Princess where
 she sat
 High in the hall : above her droop'd a lamp,
 And made the single jewel on her brow
 Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head,
 Prophet of storm : a handmaid on each side
 Bow'd toward her, combing out her long
 black hair
 Lamp from the river ; and close behind
 her stood

Eight daughters of the plough, stronger
 than men,
 Huge women blowz'd with health, and
 wind, and rain,
 And labour. Each was like a Druid rock ;
 Or like a spire of land that stands apart
 Cleft from the main, and wail'd about
 with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing
 clove
 An advent to the throne : and therebeside,
 Half-naked as if caught at once from bed
 And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay
 The lily-shining child ; and on the left,
 Bow'd on her palms and folded up from
 wrong,
 Her round white shoulder shaken with
 her sobs,
 Melissa knelt ; but Lady Blanche erect
 Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old
 days :
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my
 lips :
 I led you then to all the Castalies ;
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse ;
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you me
 Your second mother : those were gracious
 times.
 Then came your new friend : you began
 to change—
 I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to
 cool ;
 Till taken with her seeming openness
 You turn'd your warmer currents all to
 her,
 To me you froze : this was my meed for
 all.
 Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,
 And partly that I hoped to win you back,
 And partly conscious of my own deserts,

And partly that you were my civil host,
 And chiefly you were born for something
 great,
 In which I might your fellow-worker be;
 When time shall serve; and thus a noble
 scheme
 Grew up from me, and we two long since had
 down;
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,
 Up in one night and due to sudden rain,
 We took this palace; but even from the
 first,
 You stood in your own light, and danc'd
 mine,
 What student came but that you plac'd
 her path
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
 A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,
 I your old friend and tried, she new in all;
 But still her face were swell'd and mine
 were lean;
 Yet I bore up in hope she would be
 known:
 Then came these wolves: *they* knew her:
they calur'd,
 Long-closeted with her the yesternorn,
 To tell her what they were, and she to
 hear:
 And me none told: not less to an eye-
 like mine,
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,
 Last night, their mask was patent, and
 my face
 Was to you; but I thought again: I fear'd
 To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall
 hear of it
 From Lady Psyche:" you had gone to her:
 She told, perform'd; and wooing easy
 grown,
 No doubt, for slight delay, commo'd
 among us,
 In our young nursery still unknown, the
 stem:

Less gain than touchwood, while my
 honest heat
 Were all miscounted as malignant heat:
 To push my rival out of place and power,
 But public use requir'd she should be
 known;
 And since my oath was ta'en for public
 use,
 I broke the letter of it to keep the sense,
 I spoke not then at first, but watch'd
 them well,
 Saw that they kept apart, no mischief
 done;
 And yet this day (tho' you should hate
 me for it)
 I came to tell you; found that you had
 gone,
 Kidd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I
 thought,
 That surely she will speak; if not, then I:
 Told she? "Them murderers damn'd what
 they were,
 According to the coarseness of their kind,
 For thus I hear; and I know at last my
 word,
 And full of cowardice and guilty shame,
 I grant in her some sort of shame, she
 thus;
 And I would be content to wash your
 rage,
 I, that have lent my life to follow yours,
 I that have wasted here health, wealth,
 and time,
 And talents, I—you know it—I will not
 lose:
 Dismiss me, and I propose your plan,
 Fav'ored from my experience, will be
 chaf'd
 For every sort of chance, and men will say
 We did not know the real light, but
 chose:
 The way that rulers where no fact can
 stand.

She ceased: the Princess answer'd coldly, 'Good :
Your oath is broken : we dismiss you : go.
For this lost lamb (he pointed to the child)
Our mind is changed : we take it to ourself.'

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.

'The plan was mine. I built the nest'
she said

'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!' and stoop'd to updrag

Melissa : she, half on her mother propt,
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face,
and cast

A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
Which melted Egeon's fancy as she sang,
A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven ; and while

We gazed upon her came a little stir
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,
A woman, post in flying raiment. Fear
Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face,
and winn'd

Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell
Delivering seal'd dispatches which the
Head

Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
Regarding, while she read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful
bloom

As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the
rick

Flame, and all anger reddens in the
heavens ;

For anger most it seem'd, while now her
breast,

Beaten with some great passion at her
heart,

Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush the papers that she held
Rustle : at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam ;
The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire ; she
crush'd

The scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should
say

'Read,' and I read--two letters--one her
sire's.

'Fair daughter, when we sent the
Prince your way

We knew not your ungracious laws, which
learn't,

We, conscious of what temper you are
built,

Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but
fell

Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his
son.'

The second was my father's running
thus :

'You have our son : touch not a hair of
his head :

Render him up unscathed : give him your
hand :

Cleave to your contract : tho' indeed we
hear

You hold the woman is the better man :
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their
Lords

Thro' all the world, and which might well
deserve

That we this night should pluck your
palace down ;

And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole.'

So far I read ;

And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

'O not to pry and peep on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes, and a hope
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precinct ; not a scorner of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be : hear me, for I bear,
Tho' man, yet human, whatso'er your
wrongs.

From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a
life

Less mine than yours : my nurse would
tell me of you ;

I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness ; when a boy, you
stoop'd to me

From all high places, lived in all fair
lights.

Came in long breezes rapt from inmost
woods

And down to inmost earth ; at eve and
dawn

With bla. bla. bla. ring the woods ;

The leaflet wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of
glowworm light

The mellow breaker warour'd bla.
Now,

Because I would have reach'd you, had
you been

Solider up with Cassiopeia, or the en-
throned

Persephone in Hades, now at length,

Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you : but, indeed,

Not in this frequency can I lend full
tongue,

O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait
On you, their centre : let me say but this.

That many a famous man and woman,
town

And landskip, have I heard of, after seen
The dwarfs of presage : tho' when known,
there grew

Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing ; but in you
I found

My boyish dream involved and dazzled
down

And master'd, while that after-beauty
makes

Such head from act to act, from hour to
hour,

Within me, that except you slay me here,
According to your bitter statute-book,

I cannot cease to follow you, as they say
The seal does music ; who desire you more
Than growing boys their matchhood ;
dying lips,

With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life ; O more than poor
men wealth,

Than sick men health—yours, yours, not
mine—but half

Without you ; with you, whole ; and of
those halves

You worthiest ; and how'st you blud-
and bar

Your heart with system out from mine, I
hold

That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of almost'd antagonisms

To follow up the worthiest till he die :
Yet that I came not all unauthorized
Behold your father's letter.'

On one knee

Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and
dash'd

Unopen'd at her feet : a tide of fierce
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
 As waits a river level with the dam
 Ready to burst and flood the world with
 foam :
 And so she would have spoken, but there
 rose
 A hubbub in the court of half the maids
 Gather'd together : from the illumined
 hall
 Long lanes of splendour slanted o'er a
 press
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded
 ewes,
 And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-
 like eyes,
 And gold and golden heads ; they to and
 fro
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red,
 some pale,
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
 Some crying there was an army in the land,
 And some that men were in the very
 walls,
 And some they cared not ; till a clamour
 grew
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
 And worse-confounded : high above them
 stood
 The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head : but
 rising up
 Robed in the long night of her deep hair,
 so
 To the open window moved, remaining
 there
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her
 arms and call'd
 Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

'What fear ye, brawlers? am not I
 your Head?
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks :
 I dare
 All these male thunderbolts : what is it
 ye fear?
 Peace ! there are those to avenge us and
 they come :
 If not,—myself were like enough, O
 girls,
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
 Die : yet I blame you not so much for
 fear :
 Six thousand years of fear have made you
 that
 From which I would redeem you : but for
 those
 That stir this hubbub—you and you—I
 know
 Your faces there in the crowd—to-
 morrow morn
 We hold a great convention : then shall
 they
 That love their voices more than duty,
 learn
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame
 to live
 No wiser than their mothers, household
 stuff,
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the
 clown,
 The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks
 of Time,
 Whose brains are in their hands and in
 their heels,
 But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to
 thrum,
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to
 scour,
 For ever slaves at home and fools abroad.'

She, smiling, waved her hands : thereat
 the crowd
 Muttering, dissolved : then with a smile,
 that look'd
 A stroke of equid sunshine on the cliff,
 When all the glens are drown'd in more
 gloom
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and
 said :

· You have done well and like a gentle-
 man,
 And like a prince : you have our thanks
 for all :
 And you look well too in your women's
 dress :
 Well have you done and like a gentle-
 man,
 You saved our life : we owe you bitter
 thanks :
 Better have died and spilt our bones in
 the flood—
 Then men had said—but now—What
 hinders me
 To take such bloody vengeance on
 both?—
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our good
 hive,
 You would be preachers of the light to be,
 Barbarians, grosser than your native
 bears—
 O would I had his sepulchre for one hour !
 You that have dared to break our bound,
 and gull'd
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and
 thwarted us—
 I wed with thee ! I bound by precontract
 Your bride, your bondslave ! not tho' all
 the gold
 That veins the world were pack'd to make
 your crown,
 And every spoken tongue should lord you.
 Sir,

Your husband and yourself are hateful
 to us :

I trample on your offers and on you :
 Begone : we will not look upon you more.
 Here, (push them out at gates.)
 In wrath she spoke.
 Then those eight mighty dignities of the
 plough
 Bent their broad faces toward us and
 address'd
 Their motion : twice I sought to plead
 my cause,
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy
 hands,
 The weight of destiny : so from her face
 They push'd us, down the steps, and thro'
 the court,
 And with grim laughter thrust us out at
 gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty
 mound
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and
 heard
 The voice murmuring. While I listened,
 came
 On a sudden the weird *stature* and the
 doubt :
 I seem'd to move among a world of
 ghosts :
 The Princess with her monstrous woman-
 guard,
 The jest and earnest working side by side,
 The cataract and the tumult and the kings
 Were shadows : and the long fantastic
 night
 With all its doings had and had not been,
 And all things were and were not.

This went by
 As strangely as it came, and on my spirit
 Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;
 Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of
 doubts

And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but
came

As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway
sun

Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang: we thought her half-pos-
sessed,

She struck such warbling fury thro' the
words;

And, after, feigning pique at what she
call'd

The rallery, or grotesque, or false sub-
lime—

Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music—clapt her hands and cried for
war,

Or some grand fight to kill and make an
end:

And he that next inherited the tale
Half turning to the broken statue, said,
'Sir Ralph has got your colours: if I
prove

Your knight, and fight your battle, what
for me?'

It chanced, her empty glove upon the
tomb

Lay by her like a model of her hand.

She took it and she flung it. 'Fight'
she said,

'And make us all we would be, great
and good.'

He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,

A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favour, and assumed the
Prince.

v.

Now, scarce three paces measured from
the mound,

We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And 'Stand, who goes?' 'Two from
the palace' I.

'The second two: they wait,' he said,
'pass on;

His Highness wakes:' and one, that
clash'd in arms,

By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas,
led

Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and seem'd
to hear,

As in a poplar grove when a light wind
wakes

A lispings of the innumerable leaf and dies,
Each hissing in his neighbour's ear; and
then

A strangled titter, out of which there
brake

On all sides, clamouring etiquette to death,
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two
old kings

Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flash'd their
glittering teeth,

The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved
and blew,

And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded
Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek
wet with tears,

Paunted from weary sides ' King, you are free !

We did but keep you surety for our son,
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,
thou,

That tems her bristled grunners in the
sludge : '

For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn
with briars,

More crumpled than a poppy from the
-sheath,

And all one rag, disprinc'd from head to
heel.

Then some one sent beneath his vaulted
palm

A whisper'd jest to some one near him,
' Look,

He has been among his shadows.' ' Satan
take

The old women and their shadows !
(thus the King

Rear'd) make yourself a man to-night with men.

Go : Cyril said us all.'

As boys that slink
From female and the trespass-chiding eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-sleugh
To sheathing splendours and the golden
-scale

Of harness, leapt to the sun that now
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the
Earth,

And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril
-stood on.

A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and
given

For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,
whereon

Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled away
Thro' the dark forest, and later in the
night

Had come on Psyche weeping : ' then we
fell

Into your father's hand, and there I lie,
But will not speak, nor stir'

He show'd a tent
A stone-shot off : we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutre-
ments,

Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from
head to foot,

And push'd by rude hands from its
pedestal,

All her fair length upon the ground she
lay :

And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of woman-
hood,

Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and ' Come ' he
whisper'd to her,

' Lift up your head, sweet sister : lie not
thus.

What have you done but right? you
could not slay

Me, nor your prince : look up : be com-
forted :

Sweet is it to have done the thing one
ought,

When fall'n in darker ways.' And like-
wise I :

' Be comforted ! have I not lost her too,
In whose hair are wiled the nameless
charm

That none *loved for me ?*' She heard,
she mov'd,

She moan'd, a folded voice ; and up she
-sat,

And rais'd the cloak from brows as pale
and smooth

As those that mourn half-drown'd over
-death

In deathless marble. 'Her,' she said,
 'my friend—'

Parted from her—betray'd her cause and
 mine—

Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not
 your faith?

O base and bad! what comfort? none for
 me!

To whom remorseful Cyril, 'Yet I pray
 Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your
 child!'

At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

'Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my
 child,

My one sweet child, whom I shall see no
 more!

For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
 And either she will die from want of care,
 Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
 The child is hers—for every little fault,
 The child is hers; and they will beat my
 girl.

Remembering her mother: O my flower!
 Or they will take her, they will make her
 hard,

And she will pass me by in after-life
 With some cold reverence worse than
 were she dead.

Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
 To lag behind, scared by the cry they
 made,

The horror of the shame among them all:
 But I will go and sit beside the doors,
 And make a wild petition night and day,
 Until they hate to hear me like a wind
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me.

And lay my little blossom at my feet,
 'My babe, my sweet Aglana, my one child:
 And I will take her up and go my way,
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her:

Ah! what right had man not deserving of

1100

Who gave me back my child?' 'Be
 comforted,'

Said Cyril, 'you shall have it: but again
 She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank,
 and so

Like tender things that being caught feign
 death,

Spoke not, nor stirr'd.

By this a murmur ran
 Thro' all the camp and inward raced the
 scouts

With rumour of Prince Arac hard at hand.
 We left her by the woman, and without
 Found the gray kings at parle: and 'Look
 you' cried

My father 'that our compact be fulfill'd:
 You have spoilt this child; she laughs at
 you and man:

She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and
 him:

But red-faced war has rods of steel and
 fire;

She yields, or war.'

Then Gama turn'd to me:
 'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
 With our strange girl: and yet they say
 that still

You love her. Give us, then, your mind
 at large:

How say you, war or not?'

'Not war, if possible,
 O king,' I said, 'lest from the abuse of
 war,

The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
 The smouldering homestead, and the
 household flower

Torn from the lintel all the common
 wrong

A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her
 Three times a monster: now she lightens
 scorn

At him that mars her plan, but then would
 hate

(And every voice she talk'd with ratify it,
And every face she look'd on justify it)
The general fun. More subtle is this
knot.

By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I right? this altho' we dash'd
Your cities into shambles with catapults,
She would not lose; nor brought her
chain'd, a slave,

The lifting of whose eyelids is my load,
Not even would she live; but brooding
turn

The book of scorn, till all my flitting
chance

Were caught within the record of her
wrongs.

And crush'd to death: and rather, Sir,
than this

I would the old God of war himself were
dead,

Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of
wreck,

Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd in
ice,

Not to be molten out.'

And roughly spake
My father, 'Tis, you know them not, the
girls

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think
That idiot legend credible. Look you,
Sir!

Man is the hunter; woman is his game:
The sleek and shining creatures of the
chase,

We hunt them for the luxury of their
skins:

They love us for it, and we ride them
down.

Wheeling and siding with them! Out!
for shame!

Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to
them

As he that does the thing they dare not do,
Breathing and assuming, incautious, badly,
comes

With the ail of the trumpet round him,
and leaps in

Among the women, and takes them by the
score

Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd
with death

He reddens what he kisses: thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning; but this firebrand—
gentleness

To such as her! if Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.'

'Yea but Sir,' I cried,
'Will natures need wise cuts. The
soldier? No:

What dares not Ida do that she should
prize

The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose
The yesternight, and storming in extremes,
Sword for her crown, and flag for banner
down

Gage'd the crown, and had not shrou'd the
death,

No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her, king,
True woman: but you clash them all in
prize

That have as many differences as you,
The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm; and close the soldier,
one

The silken prize of peace, one this, one
that.

And some unworthy; their sinless faith,
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they
lead

More breadth of culture: is not Ida right?
They work it? true to the law within?

Severer in the logic of a life?
 Twice as magnetic to sweet influences
 Of earth and heaven? and she of whom
 you speak,
 My mother, looks as whole as some serene
 Creation minted in the golden moods
 Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a
 touch,
 But pure as lines of green that streak the
 white
 Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I
 say,
 Not like the piebald miscellany, man,
 Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual
 mire,
 But whole and one: and take them all-in-
 all,
 Were we ourselves but half as good, as
 kind,
 As truthful, much that Ida claims as right
 Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly
 theirs
 As duës of Nature. To our point: not
 war:
 Lest I lose all.
 'Nay, nay, you spake but sense'
 Said Gama. 'We remember love ourself
 In our sweet youth; we did not rate him
 then
 This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows.
 You talk almost like Ida: *she* can talk;
 And there is something in it as you say:
 But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for
 it.—
 He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,
 I would he had our daughter: for the rest,
 Our own detention, why, the causes
 weigh'd,
 Fatherly fears—you used us courtously—
 We would do much to gratify your Prince—
 We pardon it; and for your ingress here
 Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land,
 You did but come as goblins in the night,

Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's
 head,
 Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the
 milking-maid,
 Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of
 cream:
 But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,
 He comes back safe) ride with us to our
 lines,
 And speak with Arac: Arac's word is
 thrice
 As ours with Ida: something may be
 done—
 I know not what—and ours shall see us
 friends.
 You, likewise, our late guests, if so you
 will,
 Follow us: who knows? we four may
 build some plan
 Foursquare to opposition.'
 Here he reach'd
 White hands of farewell to my sire, who
 growl'd
 An answer which, half-muffled in his
 beard,
 Let so much out as gave us leave to go.

Then rode we with the old king across
 the lawns
 Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of
 Spring
 In every bole, a song on every spray
 Of birds that piped their Valentines, and
 woke
 Desire in me to infuse my tale of love
 In the old king's ears, who promised help,
 and oozed
 All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode;
 And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews
 Gather'd by night and peace, with each
 light air
 On our mail'd heads: but other thoughts
 than Peace

Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled
squares,

And squadrons of the Prince, trampling
the flowers

With clamour: for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king: they made a halt;
The horses yell'd; they clash'd their arms;
the drum

Beat; merrily-blowing shrill'd the mar-
tial life;

And in the blast and buoy of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner: none to meet us lightly
pranced

Three captains out; nor ever had I seen
Such thews of men: the midmost and the
highest

Was Arac: all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made
them glance

Like those three stars of the airy Giant's
—

That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And harkens into red and emerald, shone
Their surrons, wond'ring with morning, as
they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I
heard

War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of
force,

Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike: then took the king
His three broad ones; with now a won-
dering hand

And now a pointed finger, told them all:
A common light of smiles at our disguise
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy
[us]

Had I hear'd down within his ample
lung,

The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in
words.

'Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he
himself

Your captive, yet my father wills not war:
And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war
or no?

But then this question of your troth re-
mains:

And there's a downright honest meaning
in her;

She flies too high, she flies too high! and yet
She ask'd but space and fairplay for her
scheme;

She prest and prest it on me—I myself,
What know I of these things? but, life
and soul!

I thought her half-right talking of her
wrong;

I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what of
that?

I take her for the flower of womankind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Pshaw, she can be sweet to those
she loves.

And, right or wrong, I care not: this is
all,

I stand upon her title: she made me swear
it—

'Sdeath—and with solemnities by candle-
light—

Swear by St. something—I forget her
name—

Her troth talk'd down the fifty worst men;
No was a panted too; and so I swore.
Come, this is all; she will not; waive
your claim:

If not, the foughten field, what else, at
once

Declares to, 'sdeath! against my father's
will.'

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up
My precontract, and loth by brainless war
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;
Till one of those two brothers, half aside
And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat 'Like to like!
The woman's garment hid the woman's
heart.'

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a
blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the
point

Where idle boys are cowards to their
shame,

'Decide it here: why not? we are three
to three.'

Then spake the third 'But three to
three? no more?

No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honour: every captain
waits

Hungry for honour, angry for his king.

More, more, some fifty on a side, that each
May breathe himself, and quick! by over-
throw

Of these or those, the question settled die.'

'Yea,' answer'd I, 'for this wild
wreath of air,

This flake of rainbow flying on the highest:
Foam of men's deeds—this honour, if ye
will.

It needs must be for honour if at all:

Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail: she would not
keep

Her compact.' 'Sdeath! but we will
send to her,'

She: 'Aye, 'worthy reasons why she
should

Send by this issue: let our missile thro'.

And you shall have her answer by the
word.'

'Boys!' shriek'd the old king, but
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool; for
none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more to
say:

Back rode we to my father's camp, and
found

He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,
Or by denial flush her babbling wells

With her own people's life: three times
he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd him
thence:

The third, and those eight daughters of
the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught
his hair,

And so belabour'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one glance

he caught

Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the
noise

Of arms; and standing like a stately
Pine

Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right
and left

Suck'd from the dark heart of the long
hills roll

The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet
her will

Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was
pledged
To fight in armour for my bride, he clasp'd
His iron palms together with a cry ;
Himself would tilt it out among the knights :
But overborne by all his haughty lords,
With counsels drawn from age and state,
perforce
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce
clamour :
And nought a bold knight started up in heat,
And swore to combat for my claim till
death.

All on this side the palace ran the field
Fast to the garden-wall : and likewise
here,
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,
A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,
And great bronze valves, emboss'd with
Tomyris.
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
But now (but hard) :—so long ago the
All that long ago the days were counted
to us,
And all that noon the herald to and fro,
With message and defiance, went
about :
Fast, like a hawk, in a royal hand,
but shaken from our throats and rolling
words
Ourselves. I think it and I know

O husband, you have broken the pledge
we fell,
What heats of indignation when we heard
Of those that iron-cramp'd their woman's
feet ;
Of lands in which at the altar the
bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift
—strange :
Of living hearts that crack within the

Where—moulder their dead dogpots : and
of those,—
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, fling
Their pretty maids in the running flows,
and sweeps
The vultures, hawk, and falcon at the head
Made for all noble motion : and I saw
That equal baseness lived in modern times
With smoother men : the old heaven
heaven'd all :
Millions of throats would bawl for civil
rights,
No woman named : therefore I set my face
Against all men, and lived but for mine
own.
Far off from men I built a fold for them :
I stored it full of rich memorial :
I fenced it round with gallant institutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey
And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy boys
Broke on us at our bosom, and murder'd our
peace,
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know
not who
Of insolence and love, some pretext hold
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will
Shall not the home—the stockings be—
—the sport !—
I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame
these?
O, you? or I? for sure you think me
touch'd
In honour—what, I would not aught of
mine—
I am a woman (you?) and witness I know
Your prowess. And, with what mother's
blood
You draw from right ; you filling, I add,
With me and more : fail you will not. Still
Take not his life : he risk'd it for my own ;
His mother lives : yet whatsoever you do,
Right and right well ; strike and strike
home. O dear

Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you,
you

The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
The sole men we shall prize in the after-
time,

Your very armour hallow'd, and your
statues

Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd
aside,

We plant a solid foot into the Time,
And mould a generation strong to move
With claim on claim from right to right,
till she

Whose name is yoked with children's,
know herself;

And Knowledge in our own land make
her free,

And, ever following those two crowned
twins,

Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery
grain

Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern
horn.'

Then came a postscript dash'd across
the rest.

'See that there be no traitors in your camp:
We seem a nest of traitors—none to trust
Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-plague
of men!

Almost our maids were better at their
homes,

Than thus man-girdled here: indeed I
think

Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she left:
She shall not have it back: the child shall
grow

To prize the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed

This morning: there the tender orphan
hands

Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm
from thence

The wrath I nursed against the world:
farewell.'

I ceased; he said, 'Stubborn, but she
may sit

Upon a king's right hand in thunder-
storms,

And breed up warriors! See now, tho'
yourself

Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense, the spind-
ling king,

This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.

When the man wants weight, the woman
takes it up,

And topples down the scales; but this is
fixt

As are the roots of earth and base of all;
Man for the field and woman for the hearth:

Man for the sword and for the needle she:
Man with the head and woman with the
heart:

Man to command and woman to obey;
All else confusion. Look you! the gray
mare

Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small good-
man

Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of
Hell

Mix with his hearth: but you—she's yet
a colt—

Take, break her: strongly groom'd and
straitly curb'd

She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and
brawl

Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in
the street.

They say she's comely; there's the fairer
chance:

I like her none the less for rating at her !
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace
Of twains may wed her if her billy. By,
The bearing and the bearing of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king :

I took my leave, for it was nearly noon :
I passed upon her letter which I held,
And in the little *chase* "take not ill-
lids !"

I mused on that wild morning in the
woods,

And on the 'Follow, follow, thou shalt
win !'

I thought on all the wrathful king had
said,

And how the strange betrothment was to
end :

Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's
curse

That one should fight with shadows and
should fall ;

And like a flash the weird affection came :
King, camp and college turn'd to hollow
-dunes ;

I seem'd to move in old memorial hills,
And along battle with forgotten ghosts.

To dress myself the shadow of a dream ;
And ere I waked it was the point of dawn.

The line was ready. Long trumpet and
-gum.

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty three
Opposed to fifty, all the trumpet-lined

At the barrier like a wild hare in a band
Of chess, and a moment, too, our time

The trumpet, and again : at which the
storm

Of galloping heads bore on the ridge of
-spurs—

And riders front to front, until they closed
In conflict with the snail of shivering

points.

And thence. Yet it seem'd a dream, I
dream'd

Of fighting. On his haunches rose the
-scent.

And into fiery *giffetes* burst the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the
fire.

Part sat like rocks : part mov'd but kept
their seats :

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again
and drew :

Part stumbled mist with clouring
horses. Down

From those two bulks at Arac's side, and
down

From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,
The large blows rain'd, as here and every-
where

He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing
lists,

And all the plain,—*band*, *mass*, and
shaft, and shield—

Shock'd, like an iron-ringing arvil bang'd
With hammers ; till I thought, can this
be he

From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so,
The mother market is mine—and in my
-dream

I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
Alive with fluttering *morris* and *luller*'s eyes.

And biggish, among the statues, statue-
like,

Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jacl,
With Psyche's *luller*, was his winking me.

A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Sam's glory upon *brocc* : but the

No more—*morris*—no *brocc*—

The hand, *morris* : yet we saw me fight,
Yea, let her on me fall : with that I drove

Among the *flukes* : and bore down a
Prince,

And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my
-dream.

All that I would. But that large-moulded
 man,
 His visage all agrin as at a wake,
 Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering
 ing back
 With stroke on stroke the horse . . .
 horseman, came
 As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
 Haying the roofs and sucking up the
 drains,
 And shadowing down the champain till it
 strikes
 On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and
 cracks, and splits,
 And twists the grain with such a roar that
 Earth
 Reels, and the herdsmen cry ; for every-
 thing
 Gave way before him : only Florian, he
 That loved me closer than his own right
 eye,
 Thrust in between ; but Arac rode him
 down :
 And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the
 Prince,
 With Psyche's colour round his helmet,
 tough,
 Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at
 arms ;
 But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that
 smote
 And threw him : last I spurr'd ; I felt my
 veins
 Stretch with fierce heat ; a moment hand
 to hand,
 And sword to sword, and horse to horse
 we hung,
 Till I struck out and shouted ; the blade
 glanced,
 I did but shear a feather, and dream and
 truth
 Flow'd from me ; darkness closed me ;
 and I fell.

VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead :
 She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry ;
 All her maidens, watching, said,
 'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe ;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face ;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee —
 Like summer tempest came her tears —
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

My dream had never died or lived again.
 As in some mystic middle state I lay ;
 Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard :
 Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
 So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,
 That all things grew more tragic and more
 strange ;
 That when our side was vanquish'd and
 my cause
 For ever lost, there went up a great cry,
 The Prince is slain. My father heard
 and ran
 In on the lists, and there unlaced my
 casque
 And grovell'd on my body, and after him
 Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
 With Psyche's babe in arm : there on the
 roofs
 Like that great dame of Lapidoth she
 sang.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
 the seed,

The little seed they bough't in the dark,
Has risen and thro' the soil, and grown a
bulk

Of sparsless grain, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and reaches to the Sun.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they came ;

The leaves were wet with women's tears :
they heard

A prose of songs they would not under-
stand :

They mark'd it with the red cross of the
fall,

And would have strown it, and are fall'n
themselves.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they came,

The woodmen with their axes : to the
tree !

But we will make it faggots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and
boat,

And boats and bridges for the use of men.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they struck ;

With their own blows they hurt them-
selves, not knew

There dwelt an iron nature in the grain :
The glittering axe was broken in their
arms,

Their arms were shatter'd to the shivering
blade.

'Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall
grow

A night of Summer from the heat, a
breadth

Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power :
and roll'd

With music in the growing breeze of Time,

The tops shall strike from star to star, the
fangs

Shall move the stony bases of the world.

'And now, O nation, behold our
sanctuary

Is violate, our laws broken : fore we met
To break them more in their school,
whose arms

Champion'd our cause and won it with a
day

Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden
year

Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of
Spring,

To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three : but
come,

We will be liberal since our rights are
won.

Let them not lie in the tents with coarse
mankind,

Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that
there

Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender minis-
tries

Of female hands and hospitality.'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in
her arms,

Descending, burst the great bronze valves,
and led

A hundred mails in train across the Park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on
they came,

Their feet in flowers, but loveliest : by
them went

The enamour'd air sighing, and on their
curls

From the high tree the blossom wavering
fell,

And over them the tremulous isles of light
Slided, they moving under shade : but

Blanche

At distance follow'd : so they came : anon
Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously ; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay ;
there stay'd ;

Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—
and prest

Their hands, and call'd them dear de-
liverers,

And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said 'You shall not lie in the tents
but here,

And nursed by those for whom you
fought, and served

With female hands and hospitality.'

Then, whether moved by this, or was
it chance,

She past my way. Up started from my
side

The old lion, glaring with his whelpless
eye,

Silent ; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly
pale,

Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when
she saw

The haggard father's face and reverend
beard

Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of
pain

Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead
past

A shadow, and her hue changed, and she
said :

'He saved my life : my brother slew him
for it.'

No more : at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the
tress,

And held them up : she saw them, and a
day

Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shore
the tress

With kisses, ere the days of Lady
Blanche :

And then once more she look'd at my pale
face :

Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind ;

Her noble heart was molten in her breast ;
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth ;
she laid

A feeling finger on my brows, and pre-
sently

'O Sire,' she said, 'he lives : he is not
dead :

O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace : we will tend on him
Like one of these ; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that
make

Our progress falter to the woman's goal.'

She said : but at the happy word 'he
lives'

My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my
wounds.

So those two foes above my fallen life,
With brow to brow like night and even-
ing mixt

Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever
stole

A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden
brede,

Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
 Uncared for, spied its mother and began
 A blind and babbling laughter, and to
 dance
 Its body, and reach its fatling innocent
 arms
 And lay lingering fingers. She the ap-
 peal
 Brook'd not, but clamouring out ' Mine—
 mine—not yours.
 It is not yours, but mine : give me the
 child !
 Ceased all on tremble : piteous was the
 cry :
 So stood the unhappy mother open-
 mouth'd,
 And turn'd each face her way : wan was
 her cheek
 With hollow watch, her blooming mantle
 torn,
 Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,
 And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and
 half
 The sacred mother's bosom, panting,
 burst
 The laces toward her babe ; but she nor
 cared
 Nor knew it, clamouring on, till Ida
 heard.
 Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,
 stood
 Erect and silent, striking with her glance
 The mother, me, the child ; but he that
 lay
 Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
 Trail'd himself up on one knee : then he
 drew
 Her robe to meet his lips, and down she
 look'd
 At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it
 seem'd,
 Or self-involved : but when she bairn his
 face,

Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
 Once more thro' all her height, and o'er
 him grew
 Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
 When the tide ebbs in sunshing, and he
 said :

' O fair and strong and terrible !
 Lioness
 That with your long locks play the Lion's
 mane !
 But Love and Nature, these are two more
 terrible
 And stronger. See, your foot is on our
 necks,
 We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your
 will.
 What would you more? give her the child!
 remain
 Orb'd in your isolation : he is dead,
 Or all as dead : henceforth we let you be :
 Win you the hearts of women ; and be-
 ware
 Lest, where you seek the common love of
 these,
 The common hate with the revolving wheel
 Should drag you down, and some great
 Nemesis
 Break from a darken'd future, crown'd
 with fire,
 And tread you out for ever : but howsoe'er
 Fix'd in yourself, never in your own arms
 To hold your own, deny not hers to her.
 Give her the child ! O if, I say, you keep
 One pulse that beats true woman, if you
 loved
 The breast that fed or arm that dandled
 you,
 Or own one part of sense not flint to
 prayer,
 Give her the child ! or if you scorn to lay it,
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with
 yours,

Or speak to her, your dearest, her one
fault

The tenderness, not yours, that could not
kill,

Give *me* it : *I* will give it her.'

He said :

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd
Dry flame, she listening ; after sank and
sank

And, into mournful twilight mellowing,
dwelt

Full on the child ; she took it : ' Pretty
bud !

Lily of the vale ! half open'd bell of the
woods !

Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a
world

Of traitorous friend and broken system
made

No purple in the distance, mystery,
Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell ;

These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part : and yet how fain was I

To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to
think

I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren
breast

In the dead prime : but may thy mother
prove

As true to thee as false, false, false to me !

And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I
wish it

Gentle as freedom '—here she kiss'd it :
then—

' All good go with thee ! take it Sir,' and
so

Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed
hands,

Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she
sprang

To meet it, with an eye that swam in
thanks ;

Then felt it sound and whole from head
to foot,

And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close
enough,

And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled
it,

And hid her bosom with it ; after that
Put on more calm and added suppliantly :

' We two were friends : I go to mine
own land

For ever : find some other : as for me
I scarce am fit for your great plans : yet
speak to me,

Say one soft word and let me part forgiven.'

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.

Then Arac. ' Ida—'sdeath ! you blame
the man ;

You wrong yourselves—the woman is so
hard

Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me !
I am your warrior : I and mine have
fought

Your battle : kiss her ; take her hand, she
weeps :

'Sdeath ! I would sooner fight thrice o'er
than see it.'

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the
ground,

And reddening in the furrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama
said :

' I've heard that there is iron in the
blood,

And I believe it. Not one word ? not
one ?

Whence drew you this steel temper ? not
from me,

Not from your mother, now a saint with
saints.

She said you had a heart—I heard her
say it—

“Our Ida has a heart”—just ere she
died—

“But see that some one with authority
Be near her still” and I—I sought for
one—

All people said she had authority—
The Lady Blansie : much profit ! Not
one word ;

No ! tho’ your father sues : see how you
stand

Stiff as Lot’s wife, and all the good
knights maim’d,

I trust that there is no one hurt to death,
For your wild whim : and was it then for
this,

Was it for this we gave our palace up,
Where we withdrew from summer heats
and state,

And had our wine and chess beneath the
planes,

And many a pleasant hour with her that’s
gone,

Ere you were born to vex us ? Is it kind ?
Speak to her I say : is this not she of
whom,

When first she came, all flush’d you said
to me

Now had you got a friend of your own
age,

Now could you share your thought ; now
should men see

Two women faster welded in one love
Than pairs of wedlock ; she you walk’d
with, she

You talk’d with, whole nights long, up
in the tower,

Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows
what ; and now

A word, but one, one little kindly word,
Not one to spare her : out upon you, flint !

You love not her, nor me, nor any : nay,
You shame your mother’s judgment too.
Not true ?

You will not ? well—no heart have you,
or soul

As fancies like the vermin in a nut
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness,
So said the small king moved beyond his
wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain’d of her
force

By many a varying influence and so long.
Down thro’ her limbs a drooping languor
wept :

Her head a little bent ; and on her mouth
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded
moon

In a still water : then brake out my sire,
Lifting his grim head from my wounds,
‘O you,

Woman, whom we thought woman even
now,

And were half fool’d to let you tend our
son,

Because he might have wish’d it—but we see

The accomplice of your madness unfor-
given,

And think that you might mix his draught
with death,

When your skies change again : the
rougher hand

Is safer : on to the tents : take up the
Prince.’

He rose, and while each ear was prick’d
to attend

A tempest, thro’ the cloud that dimm’d
her broke

A genial warmth and light once more,
and shone

Thro’ glittering drops on her sad friend.

'Come hither.
 O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace me,
 come,
 Quick while I melt; make reconciliation
 sure
 With one that cannot keep her mind an
 hour :
 Come to the hollow heart they slander so !
 Kiss and be friends, like children being
 chid !
I seem no more : *I* want forgiveness too :
I should have had to do with none but
 maids,
 That have no links with men. Ah false
 but dear,
 Dear traitor, too much loved, why?—
 why?—Yet see,
 Before these kings we embrace you yet
 once more
 With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
 And trust, not love, you less.
 And now, O sire,
 Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait
 upon him,
 Like mine own brother. For my debt to
 him,
 This nightmare weight of gratitude, I
 know it ;
 Taunt me no more : yourself and yours
 shall have
 Free adit ; we will scatter all our maids
 Till happier times each to her proper
 hearth :
 What use to keep them here—now ? grant
 my prayer.
 Help, father, brother, help ; speak to the
 king :
 Thaw this male nature to some touch of
 that
 Which kills me with myself, and drags
 me down
 From my fixt height to mob me up with
 all

The soft and milky rabble of womankind,
 Poor weakling ev'n as they are.'

 Passionate tears
 Follow'd : the king replied not : Cyril
 said :

'Your brother, Lady,—Florian,—ask for
 him

Of your great head—for he is wounded
 too—

That you may tend upon him with the
 prince.'

'Ay so,' said Ida with a bitter smile,
 'Our laws are broken : let him enter too.'

Then Violet, she that sang the mournful
 song,

And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,
 Petition'd too for him. 'Ay so,' she
 said,

'I stagger in the stream : I cannot keep
 My heart an eddy from the brawling
 hour :

We break our laws with ease, but let it
 be.'

'Ay so?' said Blanche : 'Amazed am I
 to hear

Your Highness : but your Highness
 breaks with ease

The law your Highness did not make :
 'twas I.

I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,
 And block'd them out ; but these men
 came to woo

Your Highness—verily I think to win.'

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry eye :
 But Ida with a voice, that like a bell

Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling
 tower,

Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and scorn.

'Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not
 one, but all,

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
 Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
 Shall enter, if he will, — let our girls sit,
 Till the storm die! but had you stood by
 us.

The roar that breaks the Pharos from his
 base

Had left us reek. She fain would sting
 us too,

But shall not. Pass, and mingle with
 your likes.

We brook no further insult but are gone.'

She turn'd; the very rapt of her white
 neck

Was rosed with indignation: but the
 Prince

Her brother came; the king her father
 charm'd

Her wounded soul with words: nor did
 mine own

Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights,
 and bare

Straight to the doors: to them the doors
 gave way

Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'd
 The virgin marble under iron heels:

And on they moved and gain'd the hall,
 and there

Rested: but great the crush was, and
 each base,

To left and right, of those tall columns
 drown'd

In silken fluctuation and the swarm
 'Of female whisperers: at the further end

Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
 Close by her, like supporters on a shield,

How back'd with fear? but in the centre
 stood

The common men with rolling eyes;
 amazed

They glared upon the women, all aghast
 The women stared at these, all silent, save
 When armour clain'd or jingled, while
 the day,

Descending, struck a few of the hall, and
 shot

A flying splendour out of brass and steel,
 That o'er the statues leapt from head to
 head,

Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
 Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,
 And now and then an echo started up,
 And shuddering fled from room to room,
 and died

Of light in far apartments,

Then the voice
 Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:

And me they bore up the broad stairs,
 and thro'

The long-laid galleries past a hundred
 doors

To one deep chamber shut from sound,
 and due

To languid limbs and sickness; left me
 in it;

And others elsewhere they laid; and all
 That afternoon a sound arose of hoof

And chariot, many a maiden passing home
 Till happier times; but some were left of
 those

Held sagest, and the great lords out
 in,

From those two hosts that lay beside the
 walls,

Walk'd at their will, and everything was
 changed.

VII.

Ask me no more; the moon may draw the sea,
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
 shape,

With told to field, of mountain or of cape;
 But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?

Ask me to more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give ?

I have not hollow cheek or faded eye :

Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :

I strove against the stream and all in vain :

Let the great river take me to the main :

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield :

Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,

So their fair college turn'd to hospital ;

At first with all confusion : by and bye

Sweet order lived again with other laws :

A kindlier influence reign'd ; and every-
where

Low voices with the ministering hand

Hung round the sick : the maidens came,
they talk'd,

They sang, they read : till she not fair
began

To gather light, and she that was, became

Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro

With books, with flowers, with Angel
offices,

Like creatures native unto gracious act,

And in their own clear element, they
moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,

And hatred of her weakness, blent with
shame.

Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke : but
oft

Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for
hours

On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field : void was her
use,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great
black cloud

Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of
night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge to
shore,

And suck the blinding splendour from the
sand,

And quenching lake by lake and tarn by
tarn

Expunge the world : so fared she gazing
there ;

So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank

And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down
she came,

And found fair peace once more among
the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by
morn the lark

Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres,
but I

Lay silent in the muffled cage of life :

And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-
grown the bowers

Drew the great night into themselves, and
Heaven,

Star after star, arose and fell ; but I,

Deeper than those weird doubts could
reach me, lay

Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the
hand

That nursed me, more than infants in
their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her
oft,

Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but
left

Her child among us, willing she should
keep

Court-favour : here and there the small
bright head,

A light of healing, glanced about the
couch,

Or thro' the parted silks the tender face

Peep'd, sliding in upon the wounded man
 With blush and smile, a medicine in
 themselves
 To wit the length from languorous hours,
 and draw
 The sting from pain; nor seem'd it
 strange that soon
 He rose up whole, and those fair charities
 Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd
 that hour
 So gentle, so employ'd, should close in
 love,
 Than when two dewdrops on the petal
 shake
 To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper
 down,
 And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit ob-
 tain'd
 At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche
 had sworn
 That after that dark night among the fields
 She needs must wed him for her own good
 name;
 Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;
 Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but
 fear'd
 To incense the Head once more; till on
 a day
 When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
 Seen but of Psyche; on her foot she hung
 A moment, and she heard, at which her
 face
 A little flash'd, and she pass'd on; but each
 Assumed from thence a half-consent in-
 volved
 In stillness, plighted troth, and were at
 peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred
 halls
 Held carnival at will, and flying struck

With showers of random sweet on maid
 and man.
 Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
 Nor did mine own now rescind'd; nor
 yet
 Did those twin brothers, risen again and
 whole;
 Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat:
 Then came a change; for sometimes I
 would catch
 Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
 And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
 'You are not Ida;' clasp it once again,
 And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
 And call her sweet, as if in irony,
 And call her hard and cold which seem'd
 a truth:
 And still she fear'd that I should lose my
 mind,
 And often she believed that I should die:
 Till out of long frustration of her care,
 And pensive tendance in the all-weary
 noons,
 And watches in the dead, the dark, when
 clocks
 Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace floors,
 or call'd
 On flying Time from all their silver
 tongues—
 And out of memories of her kindlier days,
 And sidelong glances at my father's grief,
 And at the happy lovers heart in heart—
 And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
 And lonely listening to my matter'd
 dream,
 And often feeling of the helpless hands,
 And wordless brooding on the wasted
 cheek—
 From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
 Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to
 these,

Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with
tears
By some cold morning glacier; frail at
first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd colour day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close
to death
For weakness: it was evening: silent
light
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were
wrought
Two grand designs; for on one side arose
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they
cramm'd
The forum, and half-crush'd among the
rest
A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the
other side
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind,
A train of dames: by axe and eagle sat,
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman
scowls,
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their
veins,
The fierce triumvirs; and before them
paused
Hortensia, pleading: angry was her face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where I
was:
They did but look like hollow shows;
nor more
Sweet Ida: palm to palm she sat: the
dew
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder seem'd: I moved: I sigh'd:
a touch
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my
hand:
Then all for languor and self-pity ran

Mine down my face, and with what life I
had,
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,
So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisper-
ingly:

'If you be, what I think you, some
sweet dream,
I would but ask you to fulfil yourself:
But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
I ask you nothing: only, if a dream,
Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-
night,
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.'

I could no more, but lay like one in
trance,
That hears his burial talk'd of by his
friends,
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make
one sign,
But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd;
she paused;
She stoop'd; and out of languor leapt a
cry;
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of
death;
And I believed that in the living world
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips;
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she
rose
Glowing all over noble shame; and all
Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood
Than in her mould that other, when she
came
From barren deeps to conquer all with
love;
And down the streaming crystal dropt;
and she
Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,

Naked, a double light in air and wave,
To meet her Graces, where they deck'd
her out

For worship without aid ; nor end of mine,
Statelike, for thus ! her mate she glided
forth,

Nor glanced behind her, and I sunk and
slept,

Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy
sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near
me, held

A volume of the Poets of her land :
There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

' Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
white ;

Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry
font :

The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like
a ghost,

And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the
stars,

And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and
leaves

A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake :

So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and
slip

Into my bosom and be lost in me.'

I heard her turn the page ; she found
a small

Sweet Lily, and once more, as low, she
read :

' Come down, O maid, from yonder
mountain height :

What pleasure lives in height (the
shepherd sang)

In height and cold, the splendour of the
hills ?

But cease to move so near the Heavens,
and cease

To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;

And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down

And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,

Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk

With Death and Morning on the silver
horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,

That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :

But follow ; let the torrent dance thee
down

To find him in the valley ; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave

The monstrous ledges there to slope, and
spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling
water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in air :
So waste not thou ; but come ; for all the
vales

Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee ; the children call, and I

Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is
sweet ;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

So she low-toned ; while with slat eyes
I lay
Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the
perfect face ;
The bosom with long sighs labour'd ; and
meek
Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lumi-
nous eyes,
And the voice trembled and the hand.
She said
Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd
In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;
That all her labour was but as a block
Left in the quarry ; but she still were loth,
She still were loth to yield herself to one
That wholly seem'd to help their equal
rights
Against the sons of men, and barbarous
laws.
She pray'd me not to judge their cause
from her
That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth
than power
In knowledge : something wild within
her breast,
A greater than all knowledge, beat her
down.
And she had nursed me there from week
to week :
Much had she learnt in little time. In part
It was ill counsel had misled the girl
To vex true hearts : yet was she but a
girl—
' Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of
farce !
When comes another such ? never, I think,
Till the Sun drop dead from the signs.'

Her voice

Choked, and her forehead sank upon her
hands,

And her great heart thro' all the faultful
Past
Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not
break ;
Till notice of a change in the dark world
Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,
That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light :
She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

' Blame not thyself too much,' I said,
' nor blame
Too much the sons of men and barbarous
laws ;
These were the rough ways of the world
till now.
Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that
know
The woman's cause is man's : they rise or
sink
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe scales with man
The shining steps of Nature, shares with
man
His nights, his days, moves with him to
one goal,
Stays all the fair young planet in her
hands—
If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow ? but work no more
alone !
Our place is much : as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding
her—
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her
down—
Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
Within her—let her make herself her own
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undevelop't man,
But diverse : could we make her as the man,

Sweet Love were slain : his dearest bond
 is still.

Not like to like, but like in difference.
 Yet in the long years liker must they grow ;
 The man be more of woman, she of man ;
 He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw
 the world ;
 She mental breadth, nor fail in childward
 care,
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind ;
 Till at the last she set herself to man,
 Like perfect music unto noble words ;
 And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their
 powers.

Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
 Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
 Distinct in individualities,
 But like each other ev'n as those who love.
 Then comes the stater Eden back to
 men :
 Then reign the world's great bridal, s,
 chaste and calm :
 Then springs the crowning race of human-
 kind.

May these things be !'

Sighing she spoke ' I fear

They will not.'

' Dear, but let us type them now

In our own lives, and this proud watch-
 word rest

Of equal ; seeing either sex alone

Is half itself, and in true marriage lies

Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils

Defect in each, and always thought in
 thought,

Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,

The single pure and perfect animal,

The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full
 stroke,

Life.'

And again sighing she spoke : ' A dream

That once was mine ! what woman taught
 your think ?'

' Alone.' I said, ' from earlier than I
 know,

Immersed in rich fore-borrowings of the
 world,

I loved the woman : he, that doth not,
 lives

A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
 Or pines in sad experience worse than
 death,

Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with
 crime :

Yet was there one thro' whom I loved
 her, one

Not learned, save in gracious household
 ways,

Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
 Interpreter between the Gods and men,
 Who look'd all native to her place, and
 yet

On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds
 perforce

Sway'd to her from their orbits as they
 moved,

And girdled her with music. Happy he

With such a mother ! faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all
 things high

Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and
 fall

He shall not blind his soul with clay.'

' But I,'

Said Ida, tremulously, ' so all unlike—

It seems you love to cheat yourself with
 words :

This mother is your model. I have heard
 Of your strange doubts : they well might
 be : I seem

A mockery to my own self. Never,
 Prince ;
 You cannot love me.'
 'Nay but thee ' I said
 'From yearlong poring on thy pictured
 eyes,
 Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,
 and saw
 Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
 That mask'd thee from men's reverence
 up, and forced
 Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood :
 now,
 Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'
 thee,
 Indeed I love : the new day comes, the
 light
 Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults
 Lived over : lift thine eyes ; my doubts
 are dead,
 My haunting sense of hollow shows : the
 change,
 This truthful change in thee has kill'd it.
 Dear,
 Look up, and let thy nature strike on
 mine,
 Like yonder morning on the blind half-
 world ;
 Approach and fear not ; breathe upon my
 brows ;
 In that fine air I tremble, all the past
 Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and
 this
 Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come
 Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland
 reels
 Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.
 Forgive me,
 I waste my heart in signs : let be. My
 bride,
 My wife, my life. O we will walk this
 world,
 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,

And so thro' those dark gates across the
 wild
 That no man knows. Indeed I love
 thee : come,
 Yield thyself up : my hopes and thine are
 one :
 Accomplish thou my manhood and thy-
 self ;
 Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to
 me.'

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
 The random scheme as wildly as it rose :
 The words are mostly mine ; for when
 we ceased
 There came a minute's pause, and Walter
 said,
 'I wish she had not yielded !' then to me,
 'What, if you drest it up poetically !'
 So pray'd the men, the women : I gave
 assent :
 Yet how to bind the scattered scheme of
 seven
 Together in one sheaf? What style could
 suit?
 The men required that I should give
 throughout
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
 With which we banter'd little Lilia first :
 The women—and perhaps they felt their
 power,
 For something in the ballads which they
 sang,
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn
 close—
 They hated banter, wish'd for something
 real,
 A gallant fight, a noble princess—why
 Not make her true-heroic—true-sublime?
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?

Which yet with such a framework scarce
could lie.

Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists :

And I, betwixt them both, to please them
both,

And yet to give the story as it rose.

I moved as in a strange diagonal.

And maybe neither pleased myself nor
them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no
part

In our dispute : the sequel of the tale

I had touch'd her ; and she sat, she pluck'd
the grass,

She flung it from her, thinking : last, she
fixt

A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
' You — tell us what we are ' who might
have told,

For she was cramm'd with theories out of
books,

But that there rose a shout : the gates
were closed

At sunset, and the crowd were swarming
now,

To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these : we
climb'd

The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of
peace ;

Gray halls alone among their massive
groves ;

Trim hamlets ; here and there a rustic
tower

Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of
wheat ;

The shimmering glimpses of a stream ;
the seas ;

A red sail, or a white ; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of
France.

' Look there, a garden ! ' said my
college friend,

The Tory member's elder son, ' and there !
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her
off,

And keeps our Britain, whole within her-
self,

A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled —

Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves
have made,

Some patient force to change them when
we will,

Some civic manhood firm against the
crowd —

But yonder, whiff ! there comes a sudden
heat,

The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not
fight,

The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an old woman, and down rolls the
world

In mock heroics stranger than our own ;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most

No graver than a schoolboys' barring out ;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,

Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a
dream

As some of theirs — God bless the narrow
seas !

I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.

' Have patience,' I replied, ' ourselves
are full

Of social wrong ; and maybe wildest
dreams

Are but the needful preludes of the truth:
 For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
 The sport half-science, fill me with a
 faith,
 This fine old world of ours is but a child
 Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it
 time
 To learn its limbs: there is a hand that
 guides.'

In such discourse we gain'd the garden
 rails,
 And there we saw Sir Walter where he
 stood,
 Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
 Among six boys,* head under head, and
 look'd
 No little lily-handed Baronet he,
 A great broad-shoulder'd genial English-
 man,
 A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
 A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
 A patron of some thirty charities,
 A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
 A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
 Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn;
 Now shaking hands with him, now him,
 of those
 That stood the nearest—now address'd to
 speech—
 Who spoke few words and pithy, such as
 closed
 Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the
 year
 To follow: a shout rose again, and made
 The long line of the approaching rookery
 swerve
 From the elms, and shook the branches
 of the deer
 From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,
 and rang
 Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a shout
 More joyful than the city-roar that hails

Premier or king! Why should not these
 great Sirs
 Give up their parks some dozen times a year
 To let the people breathe? So thrice
 they cried,
 I likewise, and in groups they stream'd
 away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and
 sat on,
 So much the gathering darkness charm'd:
 we sat
 But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
 Perchance upon the future man: the walls
 Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and
 owls whoop'd,
 And gradually the powers of the night,
 That range above the region of the wind,
 Deepening the courts of twilight broke
 them up
 Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
 Beyond all thought into the Heaven of
 Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
 Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir
 Ralph
 From those rich silks, and home well-
 pleased we went.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE
 DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation,
 Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a
 mighty nation,
 Mourning when their leaders fall,
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we
Deplore?

Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his *name* for evermore.

III.

Lead out the *pageant* : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe.
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it
grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow ;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the
Past.

No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute :
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, reso-
lute,

Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,

Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,

Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.

O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men
drew,

O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood foursquare to all the winds
that blew !

Such was he whom we deplore,
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be
seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.

Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be
knoll'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his
loss ;

He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain
taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,

To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd
 guest,
 With banner and with music, with soldier
 and with priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking on
 my rest?
 Mighty Seaman, this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 Thine island loves thee well, thou famous
 man,
 The greatest sailor since our world began.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea;
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;
 O give him welcome, this is he
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee;
 For this is England's greatest son,
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon drew
 The treble works, the vast designs
 Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew

Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing
 wings,
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler
 down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves
 away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and
 overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to
 him,
 Eternal honour to his name.

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams
 forget,
 Confused by brazenless mobs and lawless
 Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and
 roughly set
 His Briton in down seas and storming
 showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the
 debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and re-
 gre
 To those great men who fought, and kept
 it ours,
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute
 control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,
 the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England
 whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom
 sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there
 springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of
 mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns
 be just,
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bad you guard the sacred coast ;
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward
 wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests howl
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all

He spoke among you, and the Man who
 spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the
 hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and
 low ;
 Whose life was work, whose language
 rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one
 rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the
 right :
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred
 named ;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
 Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state.
 Not once or twice in our rough island-
 story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the scabbard this life thirsting
 Into glossy purples, which outredde
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :

He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has
won

His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and
sun.

Such was he : his work is done.

But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
pure :

Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved
from shame

For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to
him,

Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet un moulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and
brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung,
Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere ;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane :
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will ;
The world on world in myriad myriads
roll

Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our
trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the
people's ears :
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs
and tears :
The black earth yawns : the mortal
disappears ;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY,

1852.

My Lords, we heard you speak : you told
us all

That England's honest censure went too
far ;

That our free press should cease to bawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.

It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
To fling what'er we felt, not fearing, into
words.

We love not this French God, the child
of Hell,

Wild War, who breaks the converse of
the wise ;

But though we love kind Peace so well,

We dare not ev'n by silence sanction
lies.

It might be safe our censures to withdraw ;

And yet, my Lords, not well : there is a
higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,

Tho' all the storm of Europe on us
break ;

No little German state are we,

But the one voice in Europe : we *must*
speak ;

That if to-night our greatness were struck
dead,

There might be left some record of the
things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.

Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd

On her and us and ours for evermore.

What ! have we fought for Freedom from
our *sinners*,

At last to dodge and palter with a public
crime?

Shall we fear *him* / our own we never
fear'd.

From our first Charles by force we
wring our *rights*.

Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,

We flung the burthen of the second
James.

I say, we *never* feared ! and us for these,

We broke them on the land, we drove
them on the seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the people
muse

In doubt if you be of our Barons' breed—
Were those your sires who fought at
Lewes?

Is this the manly strain of Runny-
mede?

O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,

Would lip in honey'd whispers of this
monstrous fraud !

But feel, at least, that silence here were
sin,

Not ours the fault if we have feeble
hosts—

If easy patrons of their kin

Have left the last free race with naked
coasts !

They knew the precious things they had
to guard :

For us, we will not spare the tyrant one
hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester may
bawl,

What England was, shall her true sons
forget ?

We are not cotton-spinners all,

But saved from England and her honour
yet.

And those in our *Thermopylae* shall stand,

And hold against the world this honour
of the land.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT
BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !' he said :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II.

'Forward, the Light Brigade !'
Was there a man dismay' ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd :
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian

Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention
stored,
And praise the invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations
meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labour have
outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

II.

O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to
thee !

III.

The world-compelling plan was thine,—
 And, lo ! the long laborious miles
 Of Palace ! to ! the great miles,
 Rich in model and design ;
 Harvest-tool and husbandry,
 Loom and wheel and machinery,
 Secrets of the sullen mine,
 Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
 Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,
 Sunny tokens of the Linnæ,
 Polar marvels, and a fœus
 Of wonder, out of West and East,
 And shapes and hues of Art divine !
 All of beauty, all of use,
 That one fair planet can produce,
 Brought from under every star,
 Blown from over every main,
 And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
 The works of peace with works of war.

IV.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,
 From growing commerce loose her latest
 chain,
 And let the fair white-wing'd peacemaker fly
 To happy havens under all the sky,
 And mix the seasons and the golden hours ;
 Till each man find his own in all men's good,
 And all men work in noble brotherhood,
 Breaking their mailed fleets and armed
 towers,
 And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
 And gathering all the fruits of earth and
 crown'd with all her flowers.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRIA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
 Alexandra !
 Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
 But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
 Absarmit !

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of
 fleet !

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the
 street !

Welcome her, all things youthful and
 sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet !

Break, happy land, into earlier flowers !

Make music, O bird, in the new-budded
 bowers !

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and
 prayer !

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is
 ours !

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blast !

Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers !

Flames, on the windy headland flare !

Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire !

Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air !

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire !

Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and
 higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire !

Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,

Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the
 strand,

Keer as the sea when he welcomes the
 land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's
 desire,

The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,

Blissful bride of a blissful heir,

Bride of the heir of the kings of the
 sea—

O joy to the people and joy to the
 throne,

Come to us, love us and make us your
 own !

For Saxon or Dane or Norman or

Tesson or Celt, or whatever we be,

We are each all Dane in our welcome of
 thee,

Alexandra !

*A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL
HIGHNESS MARIE ALEXAN-
DROVNA, DUCHESS OF EDIN-
BURGH.*

MARCH 7, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove for
power—
Whose will is lord thro' all his world-
domain—
Who made the serf a man, and burst
his chain—
Has given our Prince his own imperial
Flower,
 Alexandrovna.
And welcome, Russian flower, a people's
pride,
To Britain, when her flowers begin to
blow!
From love to love, from home to home
you go,
From mother unto mother, stately bride,
 Marie Alexandrovna!

II.

The golden news along the steppes is
blown,
And at thy name the Tartar tents are
stirr'd;
Elburz and all the Caucasus have heard;
And all the sultry palms of India known.
 Alexandrovna.
The voices of our universal sea
On capes of Afric as on cliffs of Kent.
The Maoris and that Isle of Continent.
And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee.
 Marie Alexandrovna!

III.

In a empire-branching, both, in lusty
life!—
Yet Harold's England fell to Norman
word;

Yet thine own land has how'd to Tartar
hordes
Since English Harold gave its throne a wife,
 Alexandrovna!
For thrones and peoples are as waifs that
swing,
And float or fall, in endless ebb and
flow;
But who love best have best the grace
to know
That Love by right divine is deathless king,
 Marie Alexandrovna!

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger land,
Where men are bold and strongly say
their say:—
See, empire upon empire smiles to-day.
As thou with thy young lover hand in hand
 Alexandrovna!
So now thy fuller life is in the west,
Whose hand at home was gracious to
thy poor:
Thy name was blest within the narrow
door;
Here also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,
 Marie Alexandrovna!

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame again?
Or at thy coming, Princess, everywhere,
The blue heaven break, and some
diviner air
Breathe thro' the world and change the
hearts of men,
 Alexandrovna?
But hearts that change not, love that
cannot cease,
And peace be yours, the peace of soul
in soul!
And howsoever this wild world may roll,
Between your peoples truth and manful
peace,
 Alfred—Alexandrovna!

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written : she never was over-wise,
Never the wife for Willy : he wouldn't take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty ! but I was against it for one.
Eh !—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock ;
Never a man could fling him : for Willy stood like a rock.
'Here's a leg for a babe of a week !' says doctor ; and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue !
I ought to have gone before him : I wonder he went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie : I have not long to stay ;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie ? you think I am hard and cold ;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old :
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie : it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time : I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar !
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blindest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with a truth,
But a lie which is part a truth is a heavier matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day ;
 And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.
 Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been !
 But soiling another, Annie, will never make onceself clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an evening late
 I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.
 The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
 And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrup the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by the gate of the farm,
 Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm.
 Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how ;
 Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant ;
 Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking courtsey and went.
 And I said, ' Let us part : in a hundred years it'll all be the same,
 You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name.'

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine :
 ' Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.
 And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill ;
 But marry me out of hand : we two shall be happy still.'

XIV.

' Marry you, Willy !' said I, ' but I needs must speak my mind,
 And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind.'
 But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, ' No, love, no ;'
 Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;
 And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.
 But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,
 Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death.
 There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.
 I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a wife ;
 But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain :
 I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain—
 For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another time :
 But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay :
 Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would have his way :
 Never jealous—not he : we had many a happy year :
 And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died :
 I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
 And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget :
 But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,
 Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you :
 Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
 While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team :
 Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.
 They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed—
 I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive :
 For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
 And Willy, my eldest born, at nigh threescore and ten ;
 I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;
 I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve :
 And the neighbours come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ;
 I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :
 But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had :
 And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease :
 And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
 And happy has been my life ; but I would not live it again.
 I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest ;
 Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower ;
 But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour,—
 Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next ;
 I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext ?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
 Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God that I keep my eyes.
 There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
 But stay with the old woman now : you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän ?
 Noorse ? thoort nowt o' a noorse : whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän
 Says that I moant 'a naw moor aäle : what I beänt a fool :
 Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gooïn' to breäk my ryle.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's nawways true :
 Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things that a do.
 I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere,
 An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' 'ere o' my bed.
 'The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend,' a said,
 An' a towd ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond
 I 'one moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
 'A cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy Marris's barne.
 Thaw a knaws I hallus voätet wi' Squoire an' choorch an' staäte,
 An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor moy Sally wur thoo'd,
 An' 'eerd her a hummin' away loike a bower a-crook 'owser my loid,
 An' I never know'd whot a nootice (or I thowt a 'e) coom'd to say,
 An' I thowt a soid whot a owt to 'a said an' I coom'd away.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knows she laäid it to mee,
 Nowt a baw, mayhap, fo' she wur a baw an' sheä.
 'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understand;
 I done my duty, my'um an' I didd'nt lay the fault.

VII.

But Parson a coome an' a goes, an' a says it easy an' frim
 'The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend,' says 'eä.
 I weänt saäy men be loiar, thaw summun said it in 'usse;
 But 'e reals woun' scrutu a weäde, an' I 'e stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born the;
 Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd 'um mysen;
 Moäst loike a butter-bump,² fur I 'eerd 'um aboot an' aboot,
 But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' räved an' rembled 'um oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
 Doon i' the woild 'enemies³ afoor I coom'd to the pläace.
 Nouns or 'Throbb'dy—stutter 'ed dree 'um an' dree an' dree,
 Nouns wur 'agg'd, fo' it wot a' 'eere—but git me my oie.

X.

Dubbut look at the waäste: theer warn't not feäid for a cow;
 Nowt at all but berran an' fann, an' brook an' a row—
 Warn't worth nowt a boing, an' now theer's lots o' broid,
 Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon 'e' broid.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
 Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,
 If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma alone,
 Mea, wi' hant comberd hant o' s'comber, an' hant o' my oie.

XII.

Do godamoighty know what a's doing a-taäkin' o' rime?
 I hant woth a-cawt 'ere a bean an' yowder a peä:
 An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all 'e 'eerd a' dree;
 And I 'e managd for Squire coom' Millinlinn flouty year.

¹ Cockchafer.² Bittern.³ Antennae.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a 'ääpoth o' sense,
 Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins— a niver mended a fence :
 But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now
 Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälms to plow !

XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoiles when they seeäs ma a passin' boy,
 Says to thessén naw doubt 'what a man a beä sewer-loy !'
 Fur they knaws what I beän to Squoire sin fust a coom'd to the 'All ;
 I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

XV.

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
 For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot muddles ma quoit ;
 Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give it to Joänes,
 Naw, nor a meänt to Robins—a niver rembles the steäms.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
 Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Divil's oän teäm.
 Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they says is sweet,
 But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn abeär to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring ma the aäle ?
 Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle ;
 I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy ;
 Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy ?
 Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saäy.
 Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy paäins :
 Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braäins.

II.

Woä—theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam : yon's parson's 'ouse—
 Dons't thou know that a man mun be cäther a man or a mouse ?
 Time to think on it then ; for thou'll be twenty to weeäk.¹
 Proputty, proputty—woä then woä—iet ma 'ear nysén speäk.

¹ This week.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as been a-talkin' o' thee ;
 Thou's been talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it me.
 'Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's lass—
 Noe—thou'll marry for luvv—an' we beath on us think's thia an ass.

IV.

See'd her todaäy goä by—Sääint's-daäy—they was ringin' the bells.
 She's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is scoors o' gells,
 Then as 'as munny an' all—wot's a beauty?—the flower as blays.
 But propotty, propotty sticks, an' propotty, propotty graws.

V.

Doänt be stunt ! I taake time : I know's what maakes thia sa mad.
 Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad ?
 But I know'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this :
 'Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is !'

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy muther coom to land,
 Wi' lots o' munny laaäid by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.
 Maaybe she warn't a beauty :—I niver giv it a thowt—
 But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt ?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deäid,
 Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle² her bread :
 Why ? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git naw 'igher ;
 An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' Varsity debt,
 Stook to his taail they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.
 An' 'e ligs on 'is back f' the grip, wi' noan to lend 'im a shove,
 Woorse nor a far-welter'd³ yowe : fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv ? what's luvv ? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,
 Maakin' 'em graä together as they've good right to do.
 Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laaäid by ?
 Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it : reason why.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the lass,
 Cooms o' a gentleman burn : an' we beath on us think's thia an ass.
 Woa then, propotty, wiltha ?—an ass as near as mays nowt⁴—
 Woa then, wiltha ? dangtha :—the beas 'e as sell as out.⁵

¹ Omitate. ² Lame. ³ Of *Swallowtail* (swallow) used to be sharp by on its back in the furrow.
⁴ Mays is *maize*. ⁵ The beas are *beasts* as anything.

THE DAISY.

XI.

Bræk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd, lad, out o' the fence !
Gentleman burn ! what's gentleman burn ? is it shillins an' pence ?
Proputty, proputty's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest
If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, fur them as 'as it's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as bræks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes their regular meäls.
Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt ; leästways 'is munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moi'd 'issén deäd, an' 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Look thou theer wheer Wrigglesby beck comes out by the 'ill !
Feyther run up to the farm, an' I runs up to the mill ;
An' I'll run up to the brig, an' that thou'll live to see ;
And if thou marries a good un I'll leave the land to thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick ;
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave the land to Dick. —
Coom oop, proputty, proputty — that's what I 'ears 'im saäy —
Proputty, proputty, proputty—canter an' canter awaäy.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O ROVE, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine ;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.
What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road ;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.
How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
Where, here and there, on sandy
beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.
How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cor-
nice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,
Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast ;

But distant colour, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green ;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oceaners flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread ;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours ;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we cross the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain ;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smile
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting spires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the
glory !
A mount of marble, a humbled spirit !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como ; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded ; and how we pass'd

From Como, when the light was grey,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxime, all the way.

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splügen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest sum-
mit

I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So clear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold :
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nurseling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and
Earth,
The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy :
Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-coun-
cils

Thunder 'Anathema,' friend, at you ;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,

Yet one lay-hearth would give you wel-
come

(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,

I watch the twilight falling brown

All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand ;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances ;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;
But when the wreath of March has
blossom'd,
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear ;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

WILL. .

I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :

For him nor moves the loud world's
 random mock,
 Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
 Who seems a promontory of rock,
 That, compass'd round with turbulent
 sound,
 In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
 Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
 Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended
 Will,
 And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
 Or seeming-genial venial fault,
 Recurring and suggesting still !
 He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
 Toiling in immeasurable sand,
 And o'er a weary sultry land,
 Far beneath a blazing vault,
 Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
 The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

IN THE VALLEY OF
 CAUTRETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest
 white,
 Deepening thy voice with the deepening
 of the night,
 All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
 I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty
 years ago.
 All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
 The two and thirty years were a mist that
 rolls away ;
 For all along the valley, down thy rocky
 bed,
 Thy living voice to me was as the voice
 of the dead,
 And all along the valley, by rock and
 cave and tree,
 The voice of the dead was a living voice
 to me.

IN THE GARDEN AT
 SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
 Within was warbling for thee :
 Shadows of three dead men
 Walk'd in the walks with me,
 Shadows of three dead men and thou
 wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
 The Master was far away :
 Nightingales warbled and sang
 Of a passion that lasts but a day ;
 Still in the house in his coffin the Prince
 of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
 In courtesy like to thee :
 Two dead men have I loved
 With a love that ever will be :
 Three dead men have I loved and thou
 art last of the three.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
 I cast to earth a seed.
 Up there came a flower,
 The people said, a weed.

Toward fro they went
 Thro' my garden-bower,
 And muttering discontent
 Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
 It wore a crown of light,
 But thieves from o'er the wall
 Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
 By every town and tower,
 Till all the people cried,
 ' Splendid is the flower.'
 T

Read my little fable :
 He that runs may read.
 Most can raise the flowers now,
 For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
 And some are poor indeed ;
 And now again the people
 Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
 Where yon broad water sweetly slowly
 glides.
 It sees itself from thatch to base
 Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die !
 Her quiet dream of life this hour may
 cease.

Her peaceful being slowly passes by
 To some more perfect peace.

THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
 Shot o'er the seething harbour-bar,
 And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
 ' O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
 I see the place where thou wilt lie.

' The sands and yeasty surges mix
 In caves about the dreary bay,
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall play.'

' Fool,' he answer'd, ' death is sure
 To those that stay and those that roam,
 But I will nevermore endure
 To sit with empty hands at home.

' My mother clings about my neck,
 My sisters crying, " Stay for shame ;"
 My father raves of death and wreck,
 They are all to blame, they are all to
 blame.

' God help me ! save I take my part
 Of danger on the roaring sea,
 A devil rises in my heart,
 Far worse than any death to me.'

THE ISLET.

' WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we go,
 For a score of sweet little summers or so ?'
 The sweet little wife of the singer said,
 On the day that follow'd the day she was
 wed,

' Whither, O whither, love, shall we go ?'
 And the singer shaking his curly head
 Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
 There at his right with a sudden crash,
 Singing, ' And shall it be over the seas
 With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
 But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,
 In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,
 With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
 To a sweet little Eden on earth that I
 know,

A mountain islet pointed and peak'd ;
 Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
 Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
 Fairly-delicate palaces shine
 Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
 And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd
 With many a rivulet high against the Sun
 The facets of the glorious mountain flash
 Above the valleys of palm and pine.'

' Thither, O thither, love, let us go.'

' No, no, no !
 For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,

There is but one bird with a musical
throat,

And his congress is but of a single note,
That it makes one weary to hear.'

'Mock me not ! mock me not ! love, let
us go.'

'No, love, no.

For the bad ever breaks into bloom on
the tree,

And a storm never wakes on the lonely sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the
blood ;

And makes it a sorrow to be.'

THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,

And with it a spiteful letter.

My name in song has done him much
wrong,

For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,

If men neglect your pages ?

I think not much of yours or of mine,

I hear the roll of the ages.

Rhymes and rhymes in the range of the
times !

Are mine for the moment stronger ?

Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,

I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as brief ;

What room is left for a hater ?

Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,

For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is that your cry ?

And men will live to see it.

Well—if it be so—so it is, you know :

And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a summer leaf,

But this is the time of hollies.

O hollies and ivies and cypresses,

How I hate the spies and the follies !

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

All God ! the giddy dithyramb

That shriek and swoop to jingling ears

Before the stony face of Time,

And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,

And do their little best to bite

And pinch their brethren in the throng,

And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room

For their sweet selves, and cannot hear

The sullen Lethe rolling down

On them and theirs and all things here :

When one small touch of Clarity

Could lift them nearer God-like state

Than if the crowded Orb should cry

Like those who cry—Diam graat :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch

I talk of. Surely, after all,

The noblest answer unto such

Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,

A famine after laid them low,

Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,

For on them brake the sudden fire ;

So thick they died the people cried,

'The Gods are moved against the land.'

The Prince in horror about his altar

To Thor and Odin lifted a hand :

'Help us from famine

And plague and strife !

What would you have of us?
 Human life?
 Were it our nearest,
 Were it our dearest,
 (Answer, O answer)
 We give you his life.'

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
 And cattle died, and deer in wood,
 And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
 And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
 And dead men lay all over the way,
 Or down in a furrow scathed with flame:
 And ever and aye the Priesthood moan'd,
 Till at last it seem'd that an answer
 came.
 'The King is happy
 In child and wife;
 Take you his dearest,
 Give us a life.'

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
 The King was hunting in the wild;
 They found the mother sitting still;
 She cast her arms about the child.
 The child was only eight summers old,
 His beauty still with his years increased,
 His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
 He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
 The Priest beheld him,
 And cried with joy,
 'The Gods have answer'd:
 We give them the boy.'

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
 He bore but little game in hand;
 The mother said, 'They have taken the
 child
 To spill his blood and heal the land:

The land is sick, the people diseased,
 And blight and famine on all the lea:
 The holy Gods, they must be appeas'd,
 So I pray you tell the truth to me.
 They have taken our son,
 They will have his life.
 Is *he* your dearest?
 Or I, the wife?'

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
 He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
 'O wife, what use to answer now?
 For now the Priest has judged for
 me.'
 The King was shaken with holy fear;
 'The Gods,' he said, 'would have
 chosen well;
 Yet both are near, and both are dear.
 And which the dearest I cannot tell!
 But the Priest was happy,
 His victim won:
 'We have his dearest,
 His only son!'

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
 The knife uprising toward the blow,
 To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
 'Me, not my darling, no!'
 He caught her away with a sudden
 cry;
 Suddenly from him brake his wife,
 And shrieking 'I am his dearest, I—
 I am his dearest!' rush'd on the knife.
 And the Priest was happy,
 'O, Father Odin,
 We give you a life,
 Which was his nearest?
 Who was his dearest?
 The Gods have answer'd;
 We give them the wife!'

WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
 Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
 Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
 Nay, but 'she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she :
 Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death : if the wages of Virtue be dust,
 Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly ?
 She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
 To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky :
 Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns ?

Is not the Vision He ? tho' He be not that which He seems ?
 Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
 Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee : thyself art the reason why ;
 For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel ' I am I ?'

Glory about thee, without thee ; and thou fulfillest thy doom—
 Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour and gloom.

Speak to Him then for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
 Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
 For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all, says the fool ;
 For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool :

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see—
 But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He ?

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

I.

THE voice and the Peak
 Far over summit and lawn.
 The lone glow and long roar
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
 dawn!

II.

All night have I heard the voice
 Rave over the rocky bar,
 But thou wert silent in heaven,
 Above thee glided the star.

III.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
 That standest high above all?
 'I am the voice of the Peak,
 I roar and rave for I fall.

IV.

'A thousand voices go
 To North, South, East, and West;
 They leave the heights and are troubled,
 And moan and sink to their rest.

V.

'The fields are fair beside them,
 The chestnut towers in his bloom;
 But they ~~they feel the desire of the deep—~~
 Fall, and follow their doom.

VI.

'The deep has power on the height,
 And the height has power on the deep;
 They are raised for ever and ever,
 And sink again into sleep.'

VII.

Not raised for ever and ever,
 But when their cycle is o'er,
 The valley, the voice, the peak, the star
 Pass, and are found no more.

VIII.

The Peak is high and flush'd
 At his highest with sunrise fire;
 The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
 And the thought of a man is higher.

IX.

A deep below the deep,
 And a height beyond the height!
 Our hearing is not hearing,
 And our seeing is not sight.

X.

The voice and the Peak
 Far into heaven withdrawn,
 The lone glow and long roar
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
 dawn!

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
 I pluck you out of the crannies;—
 Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
 Little flower—but if I could understand
 What you are, root and all, and all in all,
 I should know what God and man is.

A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true—no truer Time
 himself
 Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-
 more
 Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
 Shoots to the fall—take this and pray
 that he
 Who wrote it, honouring your sweet faith
 in him,
 May trust himself; and after praise and
 scorn,
 As one who feels the immeasurable world,
 Attain the wise indifference of the wise;
 And after Autumn past—if left to pass
 His autumn into seeming-leafless days—
 Draw toward the long frost and longest
 night,
 Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit
 Which in our winter woodland looks a
 flower.¹

¹The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Eurostymus
 Eur. p. 10.*)

EXPERIMENTS.

BOADICÆA.

While about the shore of Mona those Nonesuch's warriors
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druid
Far in the East Boadicæa, standing loftily chariot'd,
Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Càmulodúne,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

'They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populace,
Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating?
Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated?
Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?
Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering?
Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable,
Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcase a skeleton,
Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in
Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis be propitiated.
Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, Càmulodúne!
There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary.
There the hive of Roman liars worship a gluttonous emperor-idiot.
Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cássivélauin!

'Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, O Coritanian!
Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catiuechlanian, Trinobant.
These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,
Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard aërially,
Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacre,
Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies,
Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men;
Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the refluxing estuary;
Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering—
There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statue of Victory fell.
Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo the colony Càmulodúne,
Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful?
Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

'Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating.

There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
 Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,
 " Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets !
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee,
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet !
 Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,
 Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,
 Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,
 Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God,"
 So they chanted : how shall Britain light upon auguries happier ?
 So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

‘Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !
 Me the wife of rich Prasūtāgus, me the lover of liberty,
 Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
 Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators !
 See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy !
 Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
 Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Cāmulodūne !
 There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
 Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringleted Britoness—
 Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
 Shout Icenian, Catiuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,
 Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
 Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
 Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Cūnobeline !
 There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
 Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
 There they dwelt and there they rioted ; there—there—they dwell no more.
 Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,
 Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,
 Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,
 Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated,
 Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little orte out,
 Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us.’

So the Queen Boadicea, standing loftily charioted,
 Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters in her fierce volubility.
 Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
 Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments,
 Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
 Roar'd as when the rolling breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
 Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.

So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
 Clash the darts and on the ladder beat with rapid unanimous hand.
 Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
 Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
 Then her pulses at the clamouring of her enemy fainted away.
 Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.
 Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.
 Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valourous legionary.
 Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, Càmulodúne.

IN QUANTITY.

ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

THESE lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer !
 No—but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.
 When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England ?
 When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon ?
 Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,
 Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-SOUTH'D inventor of har-
 monies,
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,
 Milton, a name to resound for
 ages ;
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armouries.
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyrœan
 Rings to the roar of an angel
 onset—
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
 Where some refulgent sunset of India
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-
 woods
 Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Heptasyllabics.

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,
 Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
 Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
 All composed in a metre of Catullus,
 All in quantity, careful of my motion,
 Like the skater on ice that hardly bears
 him,
 Lest I fall unawares before the people,
 Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
 Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
 Thro' this metrification of Catullus,
 They should speak to me not without a
 welcome,
 All this chorus of indolent reviewers.
 Hard, hard, hard as I, only not to tumble.
 So fantastical is the dainty metre.
 Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor
 believe me
 Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
 O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—

Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—
 As some rare little rose, a piece of inmost
 Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
 Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.

*SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION
 OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK
 VERSE.*

So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd
 applause;
 Then loosed their sweating horses from
 the yoke,
 And each beside his chariot bound his
 own;
 And oxen from the city, and goodly
 sheep
 In haste they drove, and honey-hearted
 wine
 And bread from out the houses brought,
 and heap'd
 Their firewood, and the winds from off
 the plain
 Roll'd the rich vapour far into the heaven.

And these all night upon the bridge¹ of
 war
 Sat glorying; many a fire before them
 blazed:
 As when in heaven the stars about the
 moon
 Look beautiful, when all the winds are
 laid,
 And every height comes out, and jutting
 peak
 And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
 Break open to their highest, and all the
 stars
 Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his
 heart:
 So many a fire between the ships and
 stream
 Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of
 Troy,
 A thousand on the plain; and close by each
 Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
 And eating hoary grain and pulse the
 steeds,
 Fixt by their cars, waited the golden
 dawn. *Iliad* VIII. 542-561.



THE WINDOW;

OR, THE SONG OF THE WRENS.

FOUR years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as 'Orpheus with his lute,' and I drest up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

December, 1870.

A. TENNYSON.

THE WINDOW.

ON THE HILL.
 THE lights and shadows fly!
 Yonder it brightens and darkens down on
 the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's eye!
 Oh is it the brook, or a pool, or her win-
 dow pane,
 When the winds are up in the morning?

¹ Or, ridge.

Clouds that are winged above,
 And winds and lights and shadows that
 cannot be still,
 All running on one way to the home of
 my love.
 You are all running on, and I stand on
 the slope of the hill,
 And the winds are up in the morning!

Follow, follow the chase!
 And my thoughts are as quick and as
 quick, ever on, on, on.
 O lights, are you flying over her sweet
 little face?
 And my heart is there before you are
 come, and gone,
 When the winds are up in the morning!

Follow them down the slope!
 And I follow them down to the window-
 pane of my dear,
 And it brightens and darkens and
 brightens like my hope,
 And it darkens and brightens and
 darkens like my fear,
 And the winds are up in the morning.

AT THE WINDOW.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
 Clasp her window, trail and twine!
 Rose, rose and clematis,
 Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,
 Kiss, kiss; and make her a bower
 All of flowers, and drop me a flower,
 Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
 Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine?
 Rose, rose and clematis,
 Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,
 Kiss, kisses—and out of her bower
 All of flowers, a flower, a flower,
 Drop, a flower.

GONE.

Gone!
 Gone, till the end of the year,
 Gone, and the light gone with her, and
 left me in shadow here!
 Gone—gone away,
 Taken the stars from the night and the sun
 from the day!
 Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a
 storm in the air!
 Flown to the east or the west, flitted I
 know not where!
 Down in the south is a flash and a glow,
 she is there! she is there!

WINTER.

The frost is here,
 And fuel is dear,
 And woods are scarer,
 And fires burn clear,
 And frost is here
 And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite!
 You roll up away from the light
 The blue wood-louse, and the plump dor-
 mouse,
 And the bees are killed, and the flies are
 kill'd,
 And you bite far into the heart of the house,
 But rot into mine.

Bite, frost, bite!
 The woods are all the scarer,
 The fuel is all the dearer,
 The fires are all the clearer,
 My spring is all the nearer,
 You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
 But not into mine.

SPRING.

Birds' love and birds' song,
 Flying here and there,
 Birds' song and birds' love,
 And you with gold for hair!

Birds' song and birds' love,
 Passing with the weather,
 Men's song and men's love,
 To love once and for ever.

Men's love and birds' love,
 And women's love and men's !
 And you my wren with a crown of gold,
 You my queen of the wrens !
 You the queen of the wrens—
 We'll be birds of a feather,
 I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens,
 And all in a nest together.

THE LETTER.

Where is another sweet as my sweet,
 Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy ?
 Fine little hands, fine little feet—
 Dewy blue eye.
 Shall I write to her? shall I go ?
 Ask her to marry me by and by ?
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face ?
 Ay or no, from shy of the shy ?
 Go, little letter, apace, apace,
 Fly ;
 Fly to the light in the valley below —
 Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye :
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

NO ANSWER.

The mist and the rain, the mist and the
 rain !
 Is it ay or no? is it ay or no ?
 And never a glimpse of her window pane !
 And I may die but the grass will grow,
 And the grass will grow when I am gone,
 And the wet west wind and the world
 will go on.

Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
 No is trouble and cloud and storm,
 Ay is life for a hundred years,
 No will push me down to the worm,
 And when I am there and dead and
 gone,
 The wet west wind and the world will go
 on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and the
 wet !

Wet west wind how you blow, you
 blow !

And never a line from my lady yet !

Is it ay or no? is it ay or no ?
 Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
 The wet west wind and the world may go
 on.

NO ANSWER.

Winds are loud and you are dumb,
 Take my love, for love will come,
 Love will come but once a life.
 Winds are loud and winds will pass !
 Spring is here with leaf and grass :
 Take my love and be my wife.
 After-loves of maids and men
 Are but dainties drest again :
 Love me now, you'll love me then :
 Love can love but once a life.

THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,
 Claspt on her seal, my sweet !
 Must I take you and break you,
 Two little hands that meet ?
 I must take you, and break you,
 And loving hands must part—
 Take, take—break, break—
 Break—you may break my heart
 Faint heart never won—
 Break, break, and all's done.

AV.

Be merry, all birds, to-day,

Be merry on earth as you never were
merry before,

Be merry in heaven, O ladies, and far away,

And merry for ever and ever, and one
day more.

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.

Look, look, how he flits,

The fire-crown'd king of the wrens, from
out of the pine!

Look how they tumble the blossom, the
mad little tits!

'Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!' was ever a May
so fine?

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.

O merry the linnet and dove,

And swallow and sparrow and throatsles,
and have your desire!

O merry my heart, you have gotten the
wings of love,

And flit like the king of the wrens with
a crown of fire.

Why?

For it's ay ay, ay ay.

WHEN.

Sun comes, moon comes,

Time slips away.

Sun sets, moon sets,

Love, fix a day.

'A year hence, a year hence.'

'We shall both be gray.'

'A month hence, a month hence.'

'Far, far away.'

'A week hence, a week hence.'

'Ah, the long delay.'

'Wait a little, wait a little,

You shall fix a day.'

'To-morrow, love, to-morrow,

And that's an age-away.'

Blaze upon her window, sun,

And honour all the day.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

Light, so low upon earth,

You send a flash to the sun.

Here is the golden close of love,

All my wooing is done.

Oh, the woods and the meadows,

Woods where we hid from the wet,

Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,

Meadows in which we met!

Light, so low in the vale

You flash and lighten afar,

For this is the golden morning of
love.

And you are his morning star.

Flash, I am coming, I come,

By meadow and stile and wood.

Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,

Into my heart and my blood!

Heart, are you great enough

For a love that never ure?

O heart, are you great enough for love?

I have heard of thorns and briers.

Over the thorns and briers,

Over the meadows and stiles,

Over the world to the end of it

I dash for a million miles.

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBIT MDCCLXXXIII.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy
face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;
Thou madest Life in man and brute ;
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust ;
Thou madest man, he knows not
why ;
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And thou hast made him : thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou :
Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
We mock thee when we do not fear :
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;
What seem'd my worth since I began :
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth ;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match ?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss :
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
 The long result of love and lust,
 Behold the man that loved and lost,
 That all he was is overcome.'

II.

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
 That name the *underlying dead*,
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
 And bring the firstling to the flock ;
 And in the dusk of thee, the clock
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
 Who changest not in any gale,
 Nor branding summer suns avail
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom :

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
 I seem to fail from out my blood
 And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O *Sorrow, cruel fellowship,*
 O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
 O sweet and bitter in a breath,
 What whispers from thy lying lip ?

'The stars,' she whispers, 'blindly run ;
 A web is wov'n across the sky ;
 From out waste places comes a cry,
 And murmurs from the dying sun :

'And all the phantom, Nature, stands—
 With all the music in her tone,
 A hollow echo of my own,—
 A hollow form with empty hands.'

And shall I take a thing so blind,
 Embrace her as my natural good ;
 Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
 Upon the threshold of the mind ?

IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away ;
 My will is *one* *man* to the dock ;
 I sit within a helmless bark,
 And with my heart I muse and say :

O heart, how farest thou with thee now,
 That thou shouldst fall from thy
 desire,
 Who scarcely darest to inquire,
 'What is it makes me beat so low ?'

Something it is which thou hast lost,
 Some pleasure from thine early years.
 Break, thou deep vase of chilling
 tears,
 That grief hath shaken into frost !

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
 All night below the darken'd eyes ;
 With morning wakes the will, and
 cries,
 'Thou shalt not be the fool of loss.

V.

I sometimes hold it half a sin
 To put in words the grief I feel ;
 For words, like Nature, half reveal
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the inquiet heart and brain,
 A use in measured language lies ;
 The sad mechanic exercise,
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
 Like *coarsest* *clothes* against the cold ;
 But that *large* *grief* which *thrice* *enfold*
 I give in outline and no more.

VI.

One writes, that 'Other friends remain,'
 That 'Love is common to the race'—
 And common is the commonplace,
 And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
 My own less bitter, rather more :
 Too common ! Never morning wore
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
 Who pledgest now thy gallant son ;
 A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
 Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
 Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,
 His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
 At that last hour to please him well ;
 Who mused on all I had to tell,
 And something written, something
 thought ;

Expecting still his advent home ;
 And ever met him on his way
 With wishes, thinking, here to-day,
 Or here to-morrow will he come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
 That sittest ranging golden hair ;
 And glad to find thyself so fair,
 Poor child, that waitest for thy love !

For now her father's chimney glows
 In expectation of a guest ;
 And thinking 'this will please him
 best,'

She takes a riband or a rose ;

For he will see them on to-night ;
 And with the thought her colour
 burns ;

And, having left the glass, she turns
 Once more to set a ringlet right ;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse
 Had fallen, and her future Lord
 Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,
 Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end ?
 And what to me remains of good ?
 To her, perpetual maidenhood,
 And unto me no second friend.

VII.

Dark house, by which once more I stand
 Here in the long unlovely street,
 Doors, where my heart was used to
 beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more—
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
 And like a guilty thing I creep
 At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away
 The noise of life begins again,
 And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
 On the bald street breaks the blank day.

VIII.

A happy lover who has come
 To look on her that loves him well,
 Who'lights and rings the gateway bell,
 And learns her gone and far from home ;

He saddens, all the magic light
 Dies off at once from bower and hall,
 And all the place is dark, and all
 The chambers emptied of delight :

So find I every pleasant spot
 In which we two were wont to meet,
 The field, the chamber, and the street,
 For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
 In those deserted walks, may find
 A flower beat with rain and wind,
 Which once she foster'd up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret,
 O my forsaken heart, with thee
 And this poor flower of poesy
 Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,
 I go to plant it on his tomb.
 That if it can it there may bloom,
 Or dying, there at least may die.

IX.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
 Sailest the placid ocean-plains
 With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
 Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
 In vain ; a favourable speed
 Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
 Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
 Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
 As our pure love, thro' early light
 Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the
 prow ;
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
 My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
 Till all my widow'd race be run ;
 Dear as the mother to the son,
 More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I hear the noise about thy keel ;
 I hear the bell struck in the night ;
 I see the cabin-window bright ;
 I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,
 And travell'd men from foreign lanes ;
 And letters unto trembling hands ;
 And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him : we have idle dreams :
 This look of quiet flatters thus
 Our homeloves' families : O to us,
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover soil,
 That takes the sun-ditties and the rains,
 Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
 The chalice of the grapes of God :

Than if with thee the roaring wells
 Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine ;
 And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
 Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI.

Calm is the morn without a sound,
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
 And only thro' the faded leaf
 The chestnut pattering to the ground :

Calm and deep peace on this high world,
 And on these dews that drench the
 furze,
 And all the silvery gossamers
 That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain
 That sweeps with all its autumn
 bowers,
 And crowded farms and lessening
 towers,
 To mingle with the bounding main :

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
 These leaves that redden to the fall ;
 And in my heart, if calm at all,
 If any calm, a calm despair :

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
 And waves that sway themselves in
 rest,
 And dead calm in that noble breast
 Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs
 To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
 Some dolorous message knit below
 The wild pulsation of her wings ;

Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;
 I leave this mortal ark behind,
 A weight of nerves without a mind,
 And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
 And reach the glow of southern skies,
 And see the sails at distance rise,
 And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying ; ' Comes he thus, my friend ?
 Is this the end of all my care ? '
 And circle moaning in the air :
 ' Is this the end ? Is this the end ? '

And forward dart again, and play
 About the prow, and back return
 To where the body sits, and learn,
 That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

Tears of the widower, when he sees
 A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
 And moves his doubtful arms, and
 feels
 Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
 A void where heart on heart reposed ;
 And, where warm hands have prest
 and closed,
 Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
 An awful thought, a life removed,
 The human-hearted man I loved,
 A Spirit, not a breathing voice

Come Time, and teach me, many years,
 I do not suffer in a dream ;
 For now so strange do these things
 seem,

Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;
 My fancies time to rise on wing,
 And glance about the approaching
 sails,
 As tho' they brought but merchants'
 bales,
 And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,
 That thou hadst touch'd the land
 to-day,

And I went down unto the quay,
 And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with woe,
 Should see thy passengers in rank
 Come stepping lightly down the
 plank,

And beckoning unto those they know ;
 And if along with these should come
 The man I held as half-divine ;
 Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
 And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
 And how my life had droop'd of late,
 And he should sorrow o'er my state
 And marvel what possess'd my brain ;

And I perceived no touch of change,
 No hint of death in all his frame,
 But found him all in all the same,
 I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

To-night the winds begin to rise
 And roar from yonder dropping day :
 The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
 The rooks are blown about the skies ;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
 The cattle huddled on the lea :
 And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
 The sunbeam strikes along the world :

And but for fancies, which aver
 That all thy motions gently pass
 Athwart a plane of molten glass,
 I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren countries dead ;
 And but for fear it is not so,
 The wild unrest that lives in woe
 Would dot and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
 And onward drags a labouring breast,
 And topples round the dreary west,
 A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

What words are these have fall'n from me ?
 Can calm despair and wild unrest
 Be tenants of a single breast,
 Or sorrow such a changeling be ?

Or doth she only seem to take
 The touch of change in calm or storm ;
 But knows no more of transient form
 In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark
 Hung in the shadow of a heaven ?
 Or has the shock, so harshly given,
 Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
 And staggers blindly ere she sink ?
 And stunn'd me from my power to
 think

And all my knowledge of myself ;
 And made me that delirious man
 Whose fancy fuses old and new,
 And flashes into false and true,
 And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

Thou comest, much wept for : such a
 breeze

Compell'd thy canvas, and my prayer
 Was as the whisper of an air
 To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
 Thro' circles of the bounding sky,
 Week after week : the days go by :
 Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou may'st roam,
 My blessing, like a line of light,
 Is on the waters day and night,
 And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
 Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred bark ;
 And balmy drops in summer dark
 Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
 Such precious relics brought by
 thee :

The dust of him I shall not see
 Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may stand
 Where he in English earth is laid,
 And from his ashes may be made
 The violet of his native land.

'Tis little ; but it looks in truth
 As if the quiet homes were blast
 Among familiar names to rest
 And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head
 That sleeps or wears the mask of
 sleep.

And come, whatever loves to weep,
 And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,
 I, falling on his faithful heart,
 Would! breathing thro' his lips impart
 The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,
 And slowly forms the firmer mind,
 Treasuring the look it cannot find,
 The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave
 The darken'd heart that beat no
 more ;

They laid him by the pleasant shore,
 And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;
 The salt sea-water passes by ;
 And hushes half the babbling Wye,
 And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
 And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
 When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
 I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
 Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
 My deeper anguish also falls,
 And I can speak a little then.

XX.

The lesser griefs that may be said,
 That breathe a thousand tender vows,
 Are but as servants in a house
 Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,
 And weep the fulness from the mind :
 ' It will be hard,' they say, ' to find
 Another service such as this.'

My lighter moods are like to these,
 That out of words a comfort win ;
 But there are other griefs within,
 And tears that at their fountain freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit
 Cold in that atmosphere of Death,
 And scarce endure to draw the breath,
 Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

But open converse is there none,
 So much the vital spirits sink
 To see the vacant chair, and think,
 ' How good ! how kind ! and he is gone.'

XXI.

I sing to him that rests below,
 And, since the grasses round me
 wave,
 I take the grasses of the grave,
 And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
 And sometimes harshly will he speak ;
 ' This fellow would make weakness
 weak,
 And melt the waxen hearts of men.'

Another answers, ' Let him be,
 He loves to make parade of pain,
 That with his piping he may gain
 The praise that comes to constancy.'

A third is wroth : ' Is this an hour
 For private sorrow's barren song,
 When more and more the people
 throng
 The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

A time to sicken and to swoon,
 When Science reaches forth her arm
 To feel from world to world, and
 charms

Her secret from the latest moon ?'

Behold, ye speak an idle thing :
 Ye never knew the sacred dust :
 I do but sing because I must,
 And pipe but as the firmers sing :

And one is glad ; her note is gay,
 For now her little ones have ranged
 And one is sad ; her note is changed,
 Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII.

The path by which we twain did go,
 Which led by tracts that pleased us
 well,
 Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
 From flower to flower, from snow to
 snow :

And we with singing cheer'd the way,
 And, crown'd with all the season lent,
 From April on to April went,
 And glad at heart from May to May :

But where the path we walk'd began
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
 As we descended following Hope,
 There sat the Shadow fear'd of man ;

Who broke our fair companionship,
 And spread his mantle dark and cold,
 And wrapt thee formless in the fold,
 And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And here thou where I could not see
 Nor follow, tho' I walk'd in haste,
 And think, that somewhere in the
 waste
 The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
 Or breaking into song by fits,
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,
 The Shadow look'd from head to foot,

Who keep the keys of all the crowd,
 I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from where it
 ran
 Thro' lands where not a leaf was
 dumb ;
 But all the lavish hills would hum
 The murmur of a happy Pan :

When each by turns was guide to each,
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
 And Thought leapt out to wed with
 Thought
 Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,
 And all was good that Time could
 bring,
 And all the secret of the Spring
 Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thicket sang
 To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

And was the day of my delight
 As pure and perfect as I say ?
 The very source and fount of Day
 Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,
 This earth had been the Paradise
 If never look'd to human eyes
 Since our first Sun arose and set.

And is it that the haze of grief
 Makes former gladness loom so great ?
 The lowness of the present state,
 That sets the past in this relief ?

Of that the past will always win
 A glory from its being far ;
 And orb into the perfect star
 We saw not, when we moved therein ?

XXV.

I know that this was Life,—the track
 Whereon with equal feet we fared ;
 And then, as now, the day prepared
 The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
 As light as carrier-birds in air ;
 I loved the weight I had to bear,
 Because it needed help of Love .

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
 When mighty Love would cleave in
 twain
 The lading of a single pain,
 And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

Still onward winds the dreary way ;
 I with it ; for I long to prove
 No lapse of moons can canker Love,
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
 And goodness, and hath power to see
 Within the green the moulder'd tree,
 And towers fall'n as soon as built—

Oh, if indeed that eye foresee
 Or see (in Him is no before)
 In more of life true life no more
 And Love the indifference to be.

Then might I find, ere yet the morn
 Breaks hither over Indian seas,
 That Shadow waiting with the keys,
 To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes
 His license in the field of time,
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
 To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
 The heart that never plighted troth
 But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;
 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
 'Tis better to have loved and lost
 Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.

The time draws near the birth of Christ :
 The moon is hid ; the night is still ;
 The Christmas bells from hill to hill
 Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
 From far and near, on mead and moor,
 Swell out and fail, as if a door
 Were shut between me and the sound :

Each voice four changes on the wind,
 That now dilate, and now decrease,
 Peace and goodwill, goodwill and
 peace,
 Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
 I almost wish'd no more to wake,
 And that my hold on life would break
 Before I heard those bells again :

But they my troubled spirit rale,
 For they controll'd me when a boy ;
 They bring me sorrow touch'd with
 joy.
 The merry merry bells of Yule.

XXX.

With such compelling cause to grieve
 As daily vexes household peace,
 And chains regret to his decease,
 How dare we keep our Christmas-eve ;
 Which brings no more a welcome guest
 To enrich the threshold of the night
 With shower'd largess of delight,
 In dance and song and game and jest.
 Yet go, and while the holly bough
 Entwine the cold baptismal font,
 Make one wreath more for Use and
 Wont,
 That guard the portals of the house :
 Old sisters of a day gone by,
 Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;
 Why should they miss their yearly due
 Before their time? They too will die.

XXX.

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas-
 hearth ;
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.
 At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gambol'd, making vain pretence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.
 We paused : the winds were in the beech :
 We heard them sweep the winter larch :
 And in a circle hand-in-hand
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
 A merry song we sang with him
 Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us : scarcely next we meet :
 'They rest,' we said, 'their sleep is
 sweet,'
 And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;
 Once more we sang : 'They do not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
 Nor change to us, although they change ;

Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gather'd power, yet the same
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from
 night :
 O Father, touch the east, and light
 The light that shone when Hope was born.

XXXI.

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
 And home to Mary's house return'd,
 Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
 To hear her weeping by his grave ?

'Where wert thou, brother, those four
 days ?'
 There lives no record of reply,
 Which telling what it is to die
 Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbours met,
 The streets were fill'd with joyful
 sound,
 A solemn gladness even crown'd
 The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ !
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;
 He told it not ; or something seal'd
 The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
 Nor other thought her mind admits
 But, he was dead, and there he sits,
 And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
 All other, when her ardent gaze
 Roves from the living brother's face,
 And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
 Borne down by gladness so complete,
 She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
 With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful
 prayers,
 Whose loves in higher love endure ;
 What souls possess themselves so pure,
 Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

XXXIII.

O thou that after toil and storm
 Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer
 air,
 Whose faith has centre everywhere,
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
 Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
 Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good :
 Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
 To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe
 In holding by the law within,
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,
 And ev'n for want of such a type.

XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,
 That life shall live for evermore,
 Else earth is darkness at the core,
 And dust and ashes all that is ;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
 Fantastic beauty ; such as lurks
 In some wild Poet, when he works
 Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I ?
 'Twere hardly worth my while to
 choose
 Of things all mortal, or to use
 A little patience ere I die ;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
 Like birds the charming serpent
 draws,
 To drop head-foremost in the jaws
 Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XXXV.

Yet if some voice that man could trust
 Should murmur from the narrow
 house,
 'The cheeks drop in ; the body bows ;
 Man dies : nor is there hope in dust :'

Might I not say ? 'Yet even here,
 But for one hour, O Love, I strive
 To keep so sweet a thing alive :'
 But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,
 The sound of streams that swift or
 slow
 Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
 The dust of continents to be ;

And Love would answer with a sigh,
 'The sound of that forgetful shore
 Will change my sweetness more and
 more,

Half-dead to know that I shall die.'

O me, what profits it to put
 An idle case? If Death were seen
 At first as Death, Love had not been,
 Or been in narrowest working shut,

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
 Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
 Had bruised the herb and crushed
 the grape,

And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

XXXVI.

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame
 We yield all blessing to the name
 Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
 Where truth in closest words shall fail,
 When truth embodied in a tale
 Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
 With human hands the creed of crowds
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,
 More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the shoaf,
 Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
 And those wild eyes that watch the
 wave
 In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.

Urania speaks with darken'd brow :
 'Thou pratest here where thou art
 least ;
 This faith has many a purer priest,
 And many an abler voice than thou.

Clad down beside thy native rill,
 On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
 And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
 About the ledges of the hill.'

And my Melpomene replies,
 A touch of shame upon her cheek :
 'I am not worthy ev'n to speak
 Of thy prevailing mysteries ;

For I am but an earthly Muse,
 And owning but a little art
 To lull with song an aching heart,
 And render human love his dues ;

But brooding on the dear one dead,
 And all he said of things divine,
 (And dear to me as sacred wine
 To dying lips is all he said),

I murmur'd, as I came along,
 Of comfort clasp'd in truth reveal'd ;
 And loiter'd in the master's field,
 And darken'd sanctities with song.'

XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,
 Tho' always under alter'd skies
 The purple from the distance dies,
 My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
 The herald melodies of spring,
 But in the songs I love to sing
 A doubtful gleam of better lives.

If any care for what is here
 Survive in spirits render'd free,
 Then are these songs I sing of thee
 Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

Oh! warder of these buried bones,
 And answering now my random stridings
 With fruitful cloud and living smoke,
 Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless head,
 To thee too comes the golden hour
 When flower is feeling after flower ;
 But Sorrow—fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of men,—
 What whisper'd from her lying lips ?
 Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,
 And passes into gloom again.

XII.

Could we forget the widow'd hour
 And look on Spirits breathed away,
 As on a maiden in the day
 When first she wears her orange-flower !

When crown'd with blessing she doth rise
 To take her latest leave of home,
 And hopes and light regrets that come
 Make April of her tender eyes ;

And doubtful joys the father move,
 And tears are on the mother's face,
 As parting with a long embrace
 She enters other realms of love ;

Her office there to rear, to teach,
 Becoming as is meet and fit
 A link among the days, to knit
 The generations each with each ;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
 A life that bears immortal fruit
 In those great offices that suit
 The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern !
 How often shall her old fireside
 Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,
 How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,
 And bring her babe, and make her
 boast,
 Till ev'n those that miss'd her most,
 Shall count new things as dear as old :

But thou and I have shaken hands,
 Till growing winters lay me low ;
 My paths are in the fields I know,
 And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XIII.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss
 Did ever rise from high to higher
 As mounts the heavenward altar-fire,
 As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

But thou art turn'd to something strange,
 And I have lost the links that bound
 Thy changes ; here upon the ground,
 No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly ! yet that this could be—
 That I could wing my will with might
 To leap the grades of life and light,
 And flash at once, my friend, to thee.

For tho' my nature rarely yields
 To that vague fear implied in death ;
 Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
 The howlings from forgotten fields ;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
 An inner trouble I behold,
 A spectral doubt which makes me
 cold,
 That I shall be thy mate no more,

Tho' following with an upward mind
 The wonders that have come to thee,
 Thro' all the secular to-be,
 But evermore a life behind.

XIV.

I vex my heart with fancies dim :
 He still outstript me in the race ;
 It was but unity of place
 That made me dream I rank'd with him.

And so may Place retain us still,
 And he the much-beloved again,
 A lord of large experience, train
 To riper growth the mind and will :

And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves but knows not,
reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows?

XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its interval gloom
In some long trance should slumber on;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the colour of the flower:

So then were nothing lost to none:
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began;

And love will last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Nowaken with the dawning soul.

XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead?
For here the man is more and more;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.

The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense
Gives out at times (he knows not
whence)
A little flash, a mystic hint;

And in the long harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethean springs)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt:
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLV.

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that 'this is I.'

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of 'I,' and 'me,'
And finds 'I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch.'

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may
begin
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their due,
Had man to learn himself anew
Beyond the second birth of Death.

XLVI.

We ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and
flower,
Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it: there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
But clear from marge to marge shall
bloom
The eternal landscape of the past;

A lifelong tract of time reveal'd:
The fruitful hours of still increase;
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.

O Love, thy provinces were not large.
 A bounded field, nor stretching far ;
 Look also, Love, a brooding star,
 A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVII.

That each, who seems a separate whole,
 Should move his rounds, and fusing
 all
 The skirts of self again, should fall
 Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet :
 Eternal form shall still divide
 The eternal soul from all beside ;
 And I shall know him when we meet :

And we shall sit at endless feast,
 Enjoying each the other's good :
 What waster dream can hit the mood
 Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,
 Before the spirits fade away,
 Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
 Farewell! We lose ourselves in light.

XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
 Were taken to be such as closed
 Grave doubts and answers here pro-
 posed,
 Then these were such as men might scorn :

Her care is not to part and prove ;
 She takes, when harsher moods remit,
 What slender shade of doubt may flit,
 And makes it vassal unto love :

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,
 But better serves a wholesome law,
 And holds it sin and shame to draw
 The deepest measure from the chords :

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
 But rather loosens from the lip
 Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
 Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLIX.

From art, from nature, from the schools,
 Let random influences glance,
 Like light in many a shiver'd lance
 That breaks about the dappled pools :

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
 The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,
 The slightest air of song shall breathe
 To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
 But blame not thou the winds that
 make
 The seeming-wanton ripple break,
 The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
 Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,
 Whose muffled motions blindly
 drown
 The bases of my life in tears.

L.

Be near me when my light is low,
 When the blood creeps, and the
 nerves prick
 And tingle ; and the heart is sick
 And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
 Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust :
 And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
 And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring,
 That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
 And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

LII.

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strive,
I feel such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden
shame

And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wron'g the grave with fears untrue:
Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
There must be wisdom with great
Death:

The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours,
With larger eyes than ours can
To make allowance for us all.

LIII.

I cannot love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved;
My words are only words, and move
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

'Yet blame not thou thy plaintive
The Spirit of true love replied:
'Thou canst not move me from my
side,

Nor human frailty sin me wrong.

'What keeps a spirit wildly true
To that ideal which he bears?
What record? not the sinless year
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue:

'So first met, like an idle girl,
That life is dash'd with beads of
Abliss: thy wealth is gather'd
Wilt: Time hath scatter'd shell from
pearl.'

LIII.

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of buffed
noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green.

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had
grown
The grain by which a man may live?

O, if we held the doctrine sound,
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a trait,
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou the good: define it well:
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark and
be
Process to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

That nothing walks with endless fear:
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
O, cast us without to the world,
When God hath made the just complete:

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last—far off—at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
 An infant crying in the night :
 An infant crying for the light :
 And with no language but a cry.

LV.

The wish, that of the living whole
 No life may fail beyond the grave,
 Derives it not from what we have
 The likest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
 So careful of the type she seems,
 So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
 She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of
 cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

'So careful of the type?' but no.
 From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone
 She cries, 'A thousand types are gone ;
 I care for nothing, all shall go.

'Thou makest thine appeal to me :
 I bring to life, I bring to death :
 The spirit does but mean the breath :
 I know no more.' And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
 Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
 Who roll'd the psalm to wintry
 skies,
 Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
 And love Creation's final law—
 Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
 With ravine, shriek'd against his creed —

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
 Who battled for the True, the Just,
 Be blown about the desert dust,
 Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
 A discord. Dragons of the prime,
 That tare each other in their slime,
 Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
 What hope of answer, or redress ?
 Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII.

Peace ; come away : the song of woe
 Is after all an earthly song :
 Peace ; come away : we do him
 wrong
 To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come ; let us go : your cheeks are
 pale ;
 But half my life I leave behind :
 Methinks my friend is richly shrined ;
 The flesh shall pass ; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
 One set slow bell will seem to toll
 The passing of the sweetest soul
 That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
 Eternal greetings to the dead ;
 And 'Ave, Ave, Ave,' said,
 'Adieu, adieu' for evermore.

LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell :
 Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
 As drop by drop the water falls
 In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
 Of hearts that beat from day to day,
 Half-conscious of their dying clay,
 And those cold crypts where they shall
 cease.

The High Muse answer'd : 'Wherefore
 griève
 Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?
 Abide a little longer here,
 And thou shalt take a nobler leave.'

LIX.

O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me
 No casual mistress, but a wife,
 My bosom-friend and half of life ;
 As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
 Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
 And put thy harsher moods aside,
 If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,
 Nor will it lessen from to-day ;
 But I'll have leave at times to play
 As with the creature of my love :

And set those lips, for thou art gone,
 With so much hope for years to come,
 That, howso'er I know thee, some
 Could hardly tell what name were thine.

LX.

He past ; a soul of nobler tone :
 My spirit loved and loves him yet.
 Like some poor girl whose heart is set
 On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
 She finds the baseness of her lot,
 Half jealous of she knows not what,
 And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn ;
 She sighs amid her narrow days,
 Moving about the household ways,
 In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbours come and go,
 And tease her till the day draws by :
 At night she weeps, 'How vain
 am I !
 How should he love a thing so low ?'

LXI.

If, in thy second state sublime,
 Thy ransom'd reason change replies
 With all the circle of the wise,
 The perfect flower of human time ;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,
 How dimly character'd and slight,
 How dwarf'd a growth of cold and
 night,
 How blanch'd with darkness must I grow !

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
 Where thy first form was made a man ;
 I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor
 can
 The soul of Shakspeare love thee more.

LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast
 Could make thee somewhat blench
 or fail,

Then be my love an idle tale,
 And fading legend of the past ;

And thou, as one that once declined,
 When he was little more than boy,
 On some unworthy heart with joy,
 But lives to wed an equal mind ;

And breathes a novel world, the while
 His other passion wholly dies,
 Or in the light of deeper eyes
 Is matter for a flying smile.

LXIII.

Yet pity for a horse o'er-driven,
 And love in which my hound has part,
 Can hang no weight upon my heart
 In its assumptions up to heaven ;

And I am so much more than these,
 As thou, perchance, art more than I,
 And yet I spare them sympathy.
 And I would set their pains at ease.

So may'st thou watch me where I weep,
 As, unto vaster motions bound,
 The circuits of thine orbit round
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

Dost thou look back on what hath been,
 As some divinely gifted man,
 Whose life in low estate began
 And on a simple village green ;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
 And grasps the skirts of happy
 chance,
 And breast the blows of circumstance,
 And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known
 And lives to clutch the golden keys,
 To mould a mighty state's decrees,
 And shape the whisper of the throne ;

And moving up from high to higher,
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
 The pillar of a people's hope,
 The centre of a world's desire ;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
 When all his active powers are still,
 A distant dearness in the hill,
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
 While yet beside its vocal springs
 He play'd at counsellors and kings,
 With one that was his earliest mate ;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
 And reaps the labour of his hands,
 Or in the furrow musing stands ;
 ' Does my old friend remember me ? '

LXV.

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt ;
 I lull a fancy trouble-tost
 With ' Love's too precious to be lost,
 A little grain shall not be spilt.'

And in that solace can I sing,
 Till out of painful phases wrought
 There flutters up a happy thought,
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing ;

Since we deserved the name of friends,
 And thine effect so lives in me,
 A part of mine may live in thee
 And move thee on to noble ends.

LXVI.

You thought my heart too far diseased ;
 You wonder when my fancies play
 To find me gay among the gay,
 Like one with any trifle pleased

The shade by which my life was crost,
Which makes a desert in the mind,
Has made me kindly with my kind,
And like to him whose sight is lost ;

Whose feet are guided thro' the land,
Whose jest among his friends is free,
Who takes the children on his knee,
And winds their curls about his hand :

He plays with threads, he beats his chair
For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;
His inner day can never die,
His night of loss is always there.

LXVII.

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;
And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church like a ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVIII.

When in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times
my breath ;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows
not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with dew,
And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillé to the breaking morn.

But what is this? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not
why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :

But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXIX.

I dream'd there would be Spring no
more,
That Nature's ancient power was lost :
The streets were black with smoke
and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door :

I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs :
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown :

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth and babe and hoary
hairs :
They call'd me in the public squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns :

They call'd me fool, they call'd me child :
I found an angel of the night ;
The voice was low, the look was
bright ;
He look'd upon my crown and smiled :

He reach'd the glory of a hand,
That seem'd to touch it into leaf :
The voice was not the voice of grief,
The words were hard to understand.

LXX.

I cannot see the features right,
 When on the gloom I strive to paint
 The face I know ; the hues are faint
 And mix with hollow masks of night ;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
 A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
 A hand that points, and palled shapes
 In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;

And crowds that stream from yawning
 doors,
 And shoals of pucker'd faces drive ;
 Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
 And lazy lengths on boundless shores ;

Till all at once beyond the will
 I hear a wizard music roll,
 And thro' a lattice on the soul
 Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXXI.

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and trance
 And madness, thou hast forged at last
 A night-long Present of the Past
 In which we went thro' summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?
 Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
 Drug down the blindfold sense of
 wrong
 That so my pleasure may be whole ;

While now we talk as once we talk'd
 Of men and minds, the dust of change,
 The days that grow to something
 strange,
 walking as of old we walk'd

Beside the river's wooded reach,
 The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
 The cataract flashing from the bridge,
 The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXXII.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
 And howlest, issuing out of night,
 With blasts that blow the poplar
 white,
 And lash with storm the streaming pane ?

Day, when my crown'd estate begun
 To pine in that reverse of doom,
 Which sicken'd every living bloom,
 And blur'd the splendour of the sun ;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
 With thy quick tears that make the
 rose
 Pull sideways, and the daisy close
 Her crimson fringes to the shower ;

Who might'st have heaved a windless
 flame
 Up the deep East, or, whispering,
 play'd
 A chequer-work of beam and shade
 Along the hills, yet look'd the same,

As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;
 Day, mark'd as with some hideous
 crime,
 When the dark hand struck down
 thro' time,
 And cancell'd nature's best : but thou,

Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd brows
 Thro' clouds that drench the morning
 star,
 And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf afar,
 And sow the sky with flying boughs,

And up thy vault with roaring sound
 Climb thy thick noon, disastrous
 day ;
 Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
 And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXXIII.

So many would'st, so much to do,
 So little done, such things to be,
 How know I what had need of thee,
 For thou wert strong as thou wert true?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
 The head hath miss'd an earthly
 wreath :
 I curse not nature, no, nor death ;
 For nothing is that eras from law.

We pass ; the path that each man trod
 Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :
 What fame is left for human deeds
 In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
 Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
 And self-infolds the large results
 Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
 To those that watch it more and more,
 A likeness, hardly seen before,
 Comes out—to some one of his race :

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
 I see thee what thou art, and know
 Thy likeness to the wise below,
 Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
 And what I see I leave unsaid,
 Nor speak it, knowing Death has
 made
 His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXV.

I leave thy praises unexpress'd
 In verse that brings myself relief,
 And by the measure of my grief
 I leave thy greatness to be guess'd ;

What praise bows e'er respect
 In fitting aptest words to things,
 Or voice the reluctant that sings,
 Hath power to give thee as thou wert?

I leave thee in these halting days
 To raise a cry that lasts not long,
 And round thee with the breeze of song
 To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,
 And, while we breathe beneath the
 sun,
 The world which credits what is done
 Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame
 But somewhere, out of human view,
 Whate'er thy hands are set to do
 Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

LXXVI.

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,
 And in a moment set thy face
 Where all the starry heavens of space
 Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'
 The secular abyss to come,
 And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
 Before the mouldering of a yew ;

And if the matin songs, that woke
 The darkness of our planet, last,
 Thine own shall wither in the vast,
 Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have slatted their branchy
 towers

With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain ;
 And what are they when these remain
 The ruin'd shells of hollow towers ?

LXXVII.

What hope is here for modern rhyme
 To him who turns a musing eye
 On songs, and deeds, and lives, that
 lie
 Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain
 May bind a book, may line a box,
 May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
 Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
 And, passing, turn the page that tells
 A grief, then changed to something
 else,
 Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darken'd ways
 Shall ring with music all the same:
 To breathe my loss is more than fame,
 To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXVIII.

Again at Christmas did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas-
 hearth;
 The silent snow possess'd the earth,
 And calmly fell our Christmas-eve:

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
 No wing of wind the region swept.
 But over all things brooding slept
 The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
 Again our ancient games had place,
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
 No single tear, no mark of pain:
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
 No—mixt with all this mystic frame,
 Her deep relations are the same,
 But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXIX.

'More than my brothers are to me'
 Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
 I know thee of what force thou art
 To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
 As moulded like in nature's mint;
 And hill and wood and field did print
 The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
 Thro' all his eddying coves; the same
 All winds that roam the twilight came
 In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
 One lesson from one book we learn'd.
 Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
 To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
 But he was rich where I was poor.
 And he supplied my want the more
 As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,
 That holy Death ere Arthur died
 Had moved me kindly from his side.
 And dropt the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
 The grief my loss in him had wrought,
 A grief as deep as life or thought,
 But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain;
 I hear the sentence that he speaks;
 He bears the burthen of the weeks,
 But turns his burthen into gain.

His cheer thus shall set me free ;
 And influence'd to soothe and
 save,
 Unuseful example from the grave
 Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXXI.

Could I have said while he was here,
 'My love shall now no further range ;
 There cannot come to me the least
 change,
 For now is love mature in age.'
 Love, then, had hope of richer store :
 What end is here to my complaint ?
 This haunting whisper makes me faint,
 'More years had made me love thee more.'

But Death returns an answer sweet :
 'My sudden frost was sudden gain,
 And gave all ripeness to the grain,
 It might have drawn from after-heat.'

LXXXII.

I wage not any feud with Death
 For changes wrought on form and
 face ;
 No lower life that earth's embrace
 May give with him, can fright my faith.
 Eternal process moving on,
 From state to state the spirit walks ;
 And these are but the shortest stints,
 Of ruin'd chrysalis of ours.

Not blame I Death, because he takes
 The use of virtue out of earth :
 I know transplanted human worth
 Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
 The wrath that garners in my heart ;
 He put you down as but a part
 We cannot bear such others' part.

LXXXIII.

Dip down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long ;
 Thou doest expectant nature wrong ;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What keeps thee from the climatic breeze,
 Thy sweetness from its proper place,
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer months :

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
 The little speedwell's darling blue,
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
 That longs to burst a frozen bud,
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

When I contemplate all alone
 The life that had been thine below
 And lay my thoughts on all the plan
 To which thy crescent would have grown :

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
 A central warmth diffusing bliss
 In glance and smile, and clasp and
 kiss,

On all the intimacies of thy blood :

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;
 For now the day was drawing on,
 When thou shouldst have join'd thy life with
 mine
 To mine own home, and boys of thine.

Had I but had 'Ereth' for my loss ;
 Had that remembrance been from
 Made cypress of her orange blossom,
 Despair of Hope, and grief of bliss.

I seem to meet their least desire,
 To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.
 I see their unborn faces shine
 Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honour'd guest,
 Thy partner in the flowery walk
 Of letters, genial table-talk,
 Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labour fills
 The lips of men with honest praise,
 And sun by sun the happy days
 Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;
 And all the train of bounteous hours
 Conduct by paths of growing powers,
 To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
 Her lavish mission richly wrought,
 Leaving great legacies of thought,
 Thy spirit should fail from off the globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,
 As link'd with thine in love and fate,
 And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait
 To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
 And He that died in Holy Land
 Would reach us out the shining hand,
 And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant ?
 Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake
 The old bitterness again, and break
 The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and pall,
 I felt it when I sorrow'd most,
 'Tis better to have loved and lost,
 Than never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,
 Demanding, so to bring relief
 To this which is our common grief,
 What kind of life is that I lead ;

And whether trust in things above
 Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd ;
 And whether love for him have drain'd
 My capabilities of love ;

Your words have virtue such as draws
 A faithful answer from the breast,
 Thro' light reproaches, half exprest,
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
 Till on mine ear this message fall,
 That in Vienna's fatal walls
 God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
 That range above our mortal state,
 In circle round the blessed gate,
 Received and gave him welcome there ;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
 And show'd him in the fountain fresh
 All knowledge that the sons of flesh
 Shall gather in the cycléd times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
 Whose life, whose thoughts were
 little worth,
 To wander on a darken'd earth,
 Where all things round me breathed of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
 O heart, with kindest motion warm,
 O sacred essence, other form,
 O solemn ghost, O crowned soul !

Yet none could better know than I,
 How much of act at human hands
 The sense of human will demands
 By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
 I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
 His being working in mine own,
 The footsteps of his life in mine ;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
 With gifts of grace, that might express
 All-comprehensive tenderness,
 All-subtilising intellect :

And so my passion hath not swerved
 To works of weakness, but I find
 An image comforting the mind,
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
 That lov'd to handle spiritual strife,
 Diffused the shock thro' all my life,
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
 For other friends that once I met ;
 Nor can it suit me to forget
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
 To mourn for any overmuch ;
 I, the divided half of such
 A friendship as had master'd Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
 Eternal, separate from fears :
 The all-assuming months and years
 Can take no part away from this :

But Summer on the steaming floods,
 And Spring that swells the narrow
 brooks,
 And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
 That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
 Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
 My old affection of the tomb,
 And my prime passion in the grave :

My old affection of the tomb,
 A part of stillness, yearns to speak :
 ' Arise, and get thee forth and seek
 A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore ;
 Thy spirit up to mine can reach,
 But in dear words of human speech
 We two communicate no more.

And I, ' Can clouds of nature stain
 The starry clearness of the free ?
 How is it ? Canst thou feel for me
 Some painless sympathy with pain ?'

And lightly does the whisper fall ;
 ' 'Tis hard for thee to fathom this :
 I triumph in conclusive bliss,
 And that serene result of all.'

So hold I commerce with the dead ;
 Or so methinks the dead would say :
 Or so shall grief with symbols play,
 And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
 That these things pass, and I shall
 prove
 A meeting somewhere, love with love,
 I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
 I, clasping brother-hands, aver
 I could not, if I would, transfer
 The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
 The promise of the golden hour ?
 First love, first friendship, equal
 powers,
 That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
 That beats within a lonely place,
 That yet remembers his embrace,
 But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
 Quite in the love of what is gone,
 But seeks to beat in time with one
 That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
 Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
 The primrose of the later year,
 As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
 That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
 Of evening over brake and bloom
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
 Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
 And shadowing down the horned
 flood

In ripples, fan my brows and blow
 The fever from my cheek, and sigh
 The full new life that feeds thy
 breath
 Throughout my frame, till Doubt and
 Death,

Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
 On leagues of odour streaming far,
 To where in yonder orient star
 A hundred spirits whisper ' Peace.'

LXXXVII.

I past beside the reverent walls
 In which of old I wore the gown ;
 I roved at random thro' the town,
 And saw the tumult of the halls ;
 And heard once more in college fanes
 The storm their high-built organs
 make,
 And thunder-music, rolling, shake
 The prophets blazon'd on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,
 The measured pulse of racing oars
 Among the willows ; paced the shores
 And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
 The same, but not the same ; and
 last

Up that long walk of limes I past
 To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door :
 I linger'd ; all within was noise
 Of songs, and clapping hands, and
 boys

That crash'd the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band
 Of youthful friends, on mind and
 art,

And labour, and the changing mart,
 And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
 But send it slackly from the string ;
 And one would pierce an outer ring,
 And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,
 Would cleave the mark. A willing
 ear
 We lent him. Who, but hung to
 hear

The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace
 And music in the bounds of law,
 To those conclusions when we saw
 The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;
 And over those ethereal eyes
 The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXXXVIII.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
 Rings Eden thro' the budding quicks,
 O tell me where the senses mix,
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes employ
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
 And in the midmost heart of grief
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I—my harp would prelude woe—
 I cannot all command the strings ;
 The glory of the sum of things
 Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXIX.

Witch-elms that counterchange the floor
 Of this flat lawn with dusk and
 bright ;
 And thou, with all thy breadth and
 height
 Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How often, hither wandering down,
 My Arthur found your shadows fair,
 And shook to all the liberal air
 The dust and din and steam of town :

He brought an eye for all he saw ;
 He mixt in all our simple sports ;
 They pleased him, fresh from brawl-
 ing courts
 And dusty purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
 Immantled in ambrosial dark,
 To drink the cooler air, and mark
 The landscape winking thro' the heat :

O sound to rout the brood of cares,
 The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
 The gust that round the garden flew,
 And tumbled half the mellowing peas !

O 'Uss, when all in circle drawn
 About him, heart and ear were fed
 To hear him, as he lay and read
 The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,
 Or here she brought the harp and flung
 A ballad to the brightening moon :

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
 And break the livelong summer day
 With banquet in the distant woods ;

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,
 Discuss'd the books to love or hate,
 Or touch'd the changes of the state,
 Or threaded some Socratic dream ;

But if I praised the busy town,
 He loved to rail against it still,
 For 'ground in yonder social mil
 We rub each other's angles down,

And merge' he said 'in form and gloss
 The picturesque of man and man.'
 We talk'd : the stream beneath us ran,
 The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,

Or, - 'd within the glooming wave ;
 And last, returning from afar,
 Before the crimson-circled star
 Had fall'n into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
 We heard behind the woodland veil
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,
 And buzzings of the honied hours.

LXX.

He tasted love with half his mind,
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
 Where angels' heaven, who first
 could fling
 This bitter seed among mankind ;

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
 Were closed with wail, resume their
 life,
 They would but find in child and wife
 An iron welcome when they rise :

'Twas well, indeed, when warm with wine,
 To pledge them with a kindly tear.
 To talk them o'er, to wish them here,
 To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who past away,
 Behold their brides in other hands ;
 The hand their strides about their
 lands,
 And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, tho' their sons were none of these,
 Not less the yet-loved sire would make
 Confusion worse than death, and
 shake
 The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me :
 Whatever change the years have
 wrought,
 I find not yet one lonely thought
 That cries against my wish for thee.

XCI.

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
 And rarely pipes the mounted thrush ;
 Or underneath the barren bush
 Flits by the sea-blue bird of March ;

Come, wear the form by which I know
 Thy spirit in time among thy peers ;
 The hope of unaccomplish'd years
 Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change
 May breathe, with many roses sweet,
 Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
 That ripple round the lonely grange ;

Come : not in watches of the night,
 But where the sunbeam broodeth
 warm,
 Come, beauteous in thine after form,
 And like a finer light in light.

XCII.

If any vision should reveal
 Thy likeness, I might count it vain
 As but the canker of the brain ;
 Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
 Together in the days behind,
 I might but say, I hear a wind
 Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
 A fact within the coming year ;
 And tho' the months, revolving near,
 Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
 But spiritual presentiments,
 And such refraction of events
 As often rises ere they rise.

XCIII.

I shall not see thee. Dare I say
 No spirit ever brake the band
 That stays him from the native land,
 Where first he walk'd when claspt in clay ?

No visual shade of some one lost,
 But he, the Spirit himself, may come
 Where all the nerve of sense is
 numb ;
 Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
 With gods in un conjectured bliss,
 O, from the distance of the abyss
 Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter: hear
 The wish too strong for words to
 name:
 That in this blindness of the frame
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

NO. IV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
 With what divine attention bodi
 Should be the man whose thought
 would hold
 An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain that thou, or any, call
 The spirits from their golden day,
 Except, like them, thou too canst say,
 My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
 Imaginations calm and fair,
 The memory like a cloudless air,
 The conscience as a sea at rest:

But when the heart is full of din,
 And doubt beside the portal waits,
 They can but listen at the gates,
 And hear the household jar within.

NO. V.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,
 For underfoot the herb was dry;
 And genial warmth; and o'er the
 sky

The silvery haze of summer drawn;

And calm that let the *trapp'd linn*
 Unwavering: not a cricket chirr'd:
 The brook, alone far-off was heard,
 And on the board the fluttering urn:

And bats went round in fragrant skies,
 And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
 That haunt the dusk, with ermine
 capes—

And woolly boucass and bearded eyes:

While now we sang old songs that pass'd
 From knoll to knoll, where, could
 at ease,

The white lining glimmer'd, and the
 trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me and
 night,
 And in the house light after light
 Went out, and I was all alone.

A hunger seized my heart; I read
 Of that glad year which once had been,
 In those fall'n leaves which kept their
 green,

The noble letters of the dead:

And strangely on the silence broke
 The silent-speaking woods, and
 strange
 Was love's dumb cry defying change
 To test his worth; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigour, bold to dwell
 On doubts that drive the coward back,
 And keen thro' wordy snares to track
 Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
 The dead man touch'd me from the
 past,

And all at once it seem'd at last
 The living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and whirl'd
 About empyreal heights of thought,
 And came out that which is, and caught
 The deep pulsations of the world,

Æonian music numbering out

The steps of Time—the stocks of
 Charter—

The blows of Death. At length my
 trance

Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to frame
 In matter-moulded forms of speech,
 Or ev'n for intellect to reach
 Thro' memory that which I became :

Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
 The knolls once more where, couch'd
 at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the
 trees

Laid their dark arms about the field :

And suck'd from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering freshier overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and
 swing

The heavy-folded rose, and hung
 The lilies to and fro, and said

'The dawn, the dawn,' and died away;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and
 death,

To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes

Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true :

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.

There lives more faith in honest
 doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,

He would not make his judgment
 blind,

He faced the spectres of the mind
 And laid them : thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own ;
 And Power was with him in the
 night,

Which makes the darkness and the
 light,

And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,

As over Sinai's peaks of old,

While Israel made their gods of gold,
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees ;
 He finds on misty mountain-ground
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life—

I look'd on these and thought of thee
 In vastness and in mystery,

And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,
 Their hearts of old have beat in
 tune,

Their meetings made December June,
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;

The days she never can forget

Are earnest that he loves her yet,

Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,

He loves her yet, she will not weep,

Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep

He seems to slight her simple heart.

He throbs the labyrinth of the mind,
 He reads the sunset of the star,
 He seems so near and yet so far,
 He looks so cold! she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
 A wither'd violet is her bliss:
 She knows not what his greatness is;
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings—
 Of early faith and plighted vows;
 She knows four million of the future,
 And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
 She darkly feels him great and wise,
 She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
 'I cannot understand: I love.'

XCVIII.

You leave us: you will see the Rhine,
 And those fair hills I sail'd below,
 When I was there with him; and go
 By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath,
 That City. All her splendour seems
 No livelier than the wisp that gleams
 On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
 Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me:
 I have not seen, I will not see
 Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts
 The birth, the bridal; friend from
 friend
 Is oftener parted, fathers bond
 Above more graves, a thousand wond-

Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey
 By each cold hearth, and sadness flings
 Her shadow on the blaze of king,
 And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
 With satellites progress to and fro
 The double tides of chariots flow
 By park and suburb under brown
 Of lustier leaves; nor more content,
 He [old me], lives in any crowd,
 When all is gay with lamps, and loud
 With sport and song, in booth and tent,
 Imperial halls, or open plain;
 And wheels the circled dance, and
 breaks
 The rocket molten into flakes
 Of crimson or in emerald rain.

XCIX.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
 So loud with voices of the birds,
 So thick with lowing of the herds,
 Day, when I lost the tower of men;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red
 On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles fast
 By meadows breathing of the past,
 And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmurest in the foliage eaves
 A song that slights the coming care,
 And Autumn laying here and there
 A fiery finger on the leaves;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
 To myriads on the genial earth,
 Memories of bridal, or of birth,
 And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,
 Betwix the stumbers of the pales,
 To-day they count as kindred souls
 They know me not, but honour with me,

I climb the hill: from end to end
 Of all the landscape underneath,
 I find no place that does not breathe
 Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
 Or low morass and whispering reed,
 Or simple stile from mead to mead,
 Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;
 Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
 That hears the latest linnet trill,
 Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
 And haunted by the wrangling daw ;
 Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
 Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
 To left and right thro' meadow
 curves,
 That feed the mothers of the flock ;
 But each has pleased a kindred eye,
 And each reflects a kindlier day ;
 And, leaving these, to pass away,
 I think once more he seems to die.

C1.

Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall
 sway,
 The tender blossom flutter down,
 Unlov'd, that beech will gather
 brown,
 This maple burn itself away ;
 Unlov'd, the sun-flower, shining fair,
 Ray round with flames her disk of
 seed,
 And many a rose-carnation feed
 With summer spice the humming air ;
 Unlov'd, by many a sandy bar,
 The brook shall babble down the
 plain,
 At noon or when the lesser wain
 Is twisting round the polar star ;
 Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
 And flood the haunts of hern and
 crane ;
 Or into silver arrows break
 The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild
 A fresh association blow,
 And year by year the landscape grow
 Familiar to the stranger's child ;
 As year by year the labourer tills
 His wonted glebe, or lops the
 glades ;
 And year by year our memory fades
 From all the circle of the hills.

C11.

We leave the well-beloved place
 Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
 The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
 Will shelter one of stranger race.
 We go, but ere we go from home,
 As down the garden-walks I move,
 Two spirits of a diverse love
 Contend for loving masterdom.
 One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
 Long since its matin song, and
 heard
 The low love-language of the bird
 In native hazels tassel-hung.
 The other answers, ' Yea, but here
 Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
 With thy lost friend among the
 bowers,
 And this hath made them trebly dear.'
 These two have striven half the day,
 And each prefers his separate claim,
 Poor rivals in a losing game,
 That will not yield each other way.
 I turn to go : my feet are set
 To leave the pleasant fields and
 farms ;
 They mix in one another's arms
 To one pure image of regret.

CVI.

On that last night before we went
 From out the doors where I was
 bred,
 I dream'd a vision of the dead,
 Which left my after-morn content.
 Methought I dwelt within a hall,
 And maidens with me : distant hills
 From hidden summits fed with rills
 A river sliding by the wall.
 The hall with harp and carol rang,
 They sang of what is wise and good
 And graceful. In the centre stood
 A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;
 And which, tho' veil'd, was known to me,
 The shape of him I loved, and love
 For ever : then flew in a dove
 And brought a summons from the sea :
 And when they learnt that I must go
 They wept and wail'd, but led the
 way
 To where a little shallop lay
 At anchor in the flood below ;
 And on by many a level mead,
 And shadowing bluff that made the
 banks,
 We glided winding under ranks
 Of iris, and the golden reed ;
 And still as vaster grew the shore
 And roll'd the floods in grander
 space,
 The maidens gather'd strength and
 grace
 And presence, lordlier than before ;
 And I myself, who sat apart
 And watch'd them, wax'd in every
 limb ;
 I felt the throes of Anaktor,
 The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,
 And one would claim the history
 Of that great race, which is to be,
 And one the stamping of a coin ;
 Until the forward-creeping tides
 Began to foam, and we to draw
 From sleep to leap, to where we saw
 A great ship lift her shining sides.
 The man we lov'd was there on deck,
 But thrice as large as man he bent
 To greet us. Up the side I went,
 And fell in silence on his neck :
 Whereat those maidens with one mind
 Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong ;
 'We served thee here,' they said,
 'so long,
 And wilt thou leave us now behind ?'
 So rapt I was, they could not win
 An answer from my lips, but he
 Replying, 'Enter likewise ye
 And go with us : ' they enter'd in.
 And while the wind began to sweep
 A music out of sheet and shroud,
 We steer'd hertoward a crimson cloud
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CVII.

The time draws near the birth of Christ ;
 The moon is hid, the night is still ;
 A single church below the hill
 Is pealing, ~~follied in the mist.~~
 A single peal of bells below,
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.
 Like strangers' voices here they sound,
 In lands where not a memory strays,
 Nor landmark breathes of other days,
 But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CV.

To-night ungather'd let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand :
 We live within the stranger's laud,
 And strangely falls our Christmas eve.

Our father's dust is left alone
 And silent under other snows :
 There in due time the woolbine
 blows,
 The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse
 The genial hour with mask and
 mime ;
 For change of place, like growth of
 time,
 Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,
 By which our lives are chiefly proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm ;
 For who would keep an ancient form
 Thro' which the spirit breathes no more ?

Be neither song, nor gamè, nor feast ;
 Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be
 blown ;
 No dance, no motion, save alone
 What lightens in the lucid east

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
 Long sleeps the summer in the seed ;
 Run out your measured arcs, and lead
 The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light :
 The year is dying in the night ;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
 The year is going, let him go ;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no more ;
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife ;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times ;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful
 rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite ;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CVII.

It is the day when he was born,
 A bitter day that early sank
 Behind a purple-frosty bank
 Of vapour, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves
 To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies
 The blast of North and East, and ice
 Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
 To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
 Above the wood which grides and
 clangs
 Its leafless ribs and iron horns

Together, in the drifts that pass
 To darken on the rolling brine
 That breaks the coast. But fetch
 the wine,

Arrange the board and brim the glass :

Bring in great logs and let them lie,
 To make a solid core of heat ;
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
 Of all things ev'n as he were by ;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
 With books and music, surely we
 Will drink to him, whate'er he be,
 And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVIII.

I will not shut me from my kind,
 And, lest I stiffen into stone,
 I will not eat my heart alone,
 Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :

What profit lies in barren faith,
 And vainly yearning, thro' with
 might

To scale the heaven's highest height,
 Or dive below the wells of Death ?

What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting
 hymns ?

And on the depths of death there
 swine

The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
 Of sorrow under human skies.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise.
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CIX.

Heart-affluence in discursive talk
 From household fountains never dry ;
 The critic clearness of an eye,
 That saw thro' all the Muses' wail ;

Seraphic intellect and force
 To seize and throw the doubts of man ;
 Impassion'd logic, which outran
 The hearer in its fiery course ;

High nature amorous of the good,
 But touch'd with no ascetic gloom ;
 And passion pure in snowy bloom
 Thro' all the years of April blood ;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
 Of freedom in her regal seat
 Of England ; not the schoolboy heat,
 The blind hysterics of the Celt ;

And manhood fused with female grace
 In such a sort, the child would twine
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,
 And find his comfort in thy face ;

All these have been, and these mine eyes
 Have look'd on : if they look'd in vain,
 My shame is greater who remain,
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,
 The men of rathe and riper years :
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
 The proud was half disarm'd of pride,
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side
 To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
 The flippant put himself to school
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why ;

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,
 And felt thy triumph was as mine ;
 And loved them more, that they were
 thine,
 The graceful tact, the Christian art ;

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,
 But mine the love that will not
 tire,
 And, born of love, the vague desire
 That spurs an imitative will.

CXI.

The churl in spirit, up or down
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,
 To him who grasps a golden ball,
 By blood a king, at heart a clown ;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
 His want in forms for fashion's
 sake,
 Will let his coltish nature break
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale :

For who can always act ? but he,
 To whom a thousand memories call,
 Not being less but more than all
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd
 Each office of the social hour
 To noble manners, as the flower
 And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,
 Drew in the expression of an eye,
 Where God and Nature met in light ;

And thus he bore without abuse
 The grand old name of gentleman,
 Defamed by every charlatan,
 And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXII.

High wisdom holds my wisdom less,
 That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
 On glorious insufficiencies,
 Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room
 Of all my love, art reason why
 I seem to cast a careless eye
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou ? some novel power
 Sprang up for ever at a touch,
 And hope could never hope too much,
 In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,
 And tracts of calm from tempest
 made,
 And world-wide fluctuation sway'd
 In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

CXIII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise ;
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with
 thee
 Which not alone had guided me,
 But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen
 In intellect, with force and skill
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have been :

A life in civic action warm,
 A soul on highest mission sent,
 A potent voice of Parliament,
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
 Becoming, when the time has birth,
 A lever to uplift the earth
 And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,
 With agonies, with energies,
 With overthrowings, and with cries,
 And undulations to and fro.

CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall
 rail
 Against her beauty? May she mix
 With men and prosper! Who shall
 fix

Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire:
 She sets her forward countenance
 And leaps into the future chance,
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—
 She cannot fight the fear of death.
 What is she, cut from love and faith,
 But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst
 All barriers in her onward race
 For power. Let her know her place;
 She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
 If all be not in vain; and guide
 Her footsteps, moving side by side
 With wisdom, like the younger child:

For she is earthly of the mind,
 But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
 O, friend, who camest to thy goal
 So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
 Who grewest not alone in power
 And knowledge, but by year and
 hour

In reverence and in charity.

CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
 Now burgeons every maze of quick
 About the flowering squares, and
 thick

By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
 The distance takes a lovelier hue,
 And drown'd in yonder living blue
 The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
 The flocks are whiter down the vale,
 And milkier every milky sail
 On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
 In yonder greening gleam, and fly
 The happy birds, that change their sky
 To build and brood; that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
 Spring wakens too; and my regret
 Becomes an April violet,
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
 That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
 And meets the year, and gives and
 takes
 The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
 The life re-orient out of dust,
 Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
 Upon me, while I muse alone;
 And that dear voice, I once have
 known,
 Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
 For days of happy commune dead ;
 Less yearning for the friendship fled,
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXVII.

O days and hours, your work is this,
 To hold me from my proper place,
 A little while from his embrace,
 For fuller gain of after bliss :

That out of distance might ensue
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet ;
 And unto meeting when we meet,
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
 And every span of shade that steals,
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,
 And all the courses of the suns.

CXVIII.

Contemplate all this work of Time,
 The giant labouring in his youth ;
 Nor dream of human love and truth,
 As dying Nature's earth and lime ;

But trust that those we call the dead
 Are breathers of an ampler day
 For ever nobler ends. They say,
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
 And grew to seeming-random forms,
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
 Till at the last arose the man ;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to
 clime,
 The herald of a higher race,
 And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more ;
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and
 show

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears,
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast ;
 Move upward, working out the beast,
 And let the ape and tiger die.

CXIX.

Doors, where my heart was used to beat
 So quickly, not as one that weeps
 I come once more ; the city sleeps
 I smell the meadow in the street ;

I hear a chirp of birds ; I see
 Betwixt the black fronts long-
 withdrawn
 A light-blue lane of early dawn,
 And think of early days and thee,

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland
 And bright the friendship of thine eye ;
 And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
 I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXX.

I trust I have not wasted breath :
 I think we are not wholly brain,
 Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,
 Like Paul with beasts, I fought with
 Death ;

Not only cunning casts in clay :
 Let Science prove we are, and then
 What matters Science unto men,
 At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wisest man who springs
 Hereafter, up from childhood shape
 His action like the greater ape,
 But I was *Asen* to other things.

CXXI.

Sad Hesper (for the buried sun)
 And ready, thou, to die with him,
 Thou watchest all things ever dim
 And dimmer, and a glory done :

The team is loosen'd from the Wain,
 The boat is drawn upon the shore ;
 Thou listenest to the closing door,
 And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
 By thee the world's great work is heard
 beginning, and the wakeful bird ;
 Behind thee comes the greater light :

The market boat is on the stream,
 And voices hail it from the brink ;
 Thou hear'st the village hammer clink,
 And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
 For what is one, the first, the last,
 Thou, like my present and my past,
 Thy place is changed ; thou art the same.

CXXII.

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
 While I rose up against my doom,
 And yearn'd to burst the folded
 gloom,
 To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
 The strong imagination roll
 A sphere of stars about my soul,
 In all her motion one with law ;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
 Divide us not, be with me now,
 And enter in at breast and brow,
 Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
 And like an inconsiderate boy,
 As in the former flush of joy,
 I slip the thoughts of life and death ;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
 And every dew-drop points a bow,
 The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
 And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXIII.

There rolls the deep where grew the tree
 O earth, what changes hast thou
 seen !
 There where the long street roars,
 hath been

The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
 From form to form, and nothing
 stands ;

They melt like mist, the solid lands,
 Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,
 And dream my dream, and hold it
 true ;

For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXIV.

That which we dare invoke to bless :
 Our dearest faith ; our ghostliest
 doubt ;
 He, They, One, All ; within, with-
 out ;
 The Power in darkness whom we guess ;

I found Him not in world or sun,
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,
 The petty cobwebs we have spun :

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
 I heard a voice 'believe no more'
 And heard an ever-breaking shore
 That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear :
 But that blind clamour made me
 wise ;

Then was I as a child that cries,
 But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again
 What is, and no man understands ;
 And out of darkness came the hands
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

CXXV.

Whatever I have said or sung,
 Some bitter notes my harp would
 give,

Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth
 She did but look through dimmer
 eyes ;

Or Love but play'd with gracious
 lies,
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth :

And if the song were full of care,
 He breathed the spirit of the song ;
 And if the words were sweet and
 strong
 He set his royal signet there ;

Abiding with me till I sail
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
 And this electric force, that keeps
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

CXXVI.

Love is and was my Lord and King,
 And in his presence I attend
 To hear the tidings of my friend,
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep
 Within his court on earth, and
 sleep

Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
 Who moves about from place to
 place,

And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII.

And all is well, tho' faith and form
 Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;
 Well roars the storm to those that
 hear

A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
 And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again
 The red fool-fury of the Seine
 Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
 And him, the lazar, in his rags :
 They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
 The fortress crashes from on high,
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,
 And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,
 Unpalsied when he met with Death,
 Is comrade of the lesser faith
 That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
 Of onward time shall yet be made,
 And throned races may degrade ;
 Yet O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and
 Fear,
 If all your office had to do
 With old results that look like new ;
 If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
 To fool the crowd with glorious
 lies,
 To cleave a creed in sects and cries,
 To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,
 To cramp the student at his desk,
 To make old bareness picturesque
 And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;

Why then my scorn might well descend
 On you and yours. I see in part
 That all, as in some piece of art,
 Is toil coöperant to an end.

CXXIX.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
 So far, so near in woe and weal ;
 O loved the most, when most I feel
 There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown ; human, divine ;
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not
 die,

Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
 Loved deeper, darklier understood ;
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,
 And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXX.

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
 I hear thee where the waters run ;
 Thou standest in the rising sun,
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
 But tho' I seem in star and flower
 To feel thee some diffusive power,
 I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
 My love is vaster passion now ;
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature
 thou,
 I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXXI.

O living will that shalt endure
 When all that seems shall suffer
 shock,
 Rise in the spiritual rock,
 Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquer'd years
 To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
 The truths that never can be proved
 Until we close with all we loved,
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O true and tried, so well and long,
 Demand not thou a marriage lay ;
 In that it is thy marriage day
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
 Since first he told me that he loved
 A daughter of our house ; nor proved
 Since that dark day a day like this ;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
 Some thrice three years : they went
 and came,
 Remade the blood and changed the
 frame,
 And yet is love not less, but more ;

No longer caring to embalm
 In dying songs a dead regret,
 But like a statue solid-set,
 And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
 Than in the summers that are
 flown,
 For I myself with these have grown
 To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I made
 As echoes out of weaker times,
 As half but idle brawling rhymes,
 The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
 That must be made a wife ere
 noon?
 She enters, glowing like the moon
 Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes
 And then on thee ; they meet thy
 look
 And brighten like the star that shook
 Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
 He too foretold the perfect rose.
 For thee she grew, for thee she grows
 For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy ; full of power ;
 As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,
 Consistent ; wearing all that weight
 Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,
 And I must give away the bride ;
 She fears not, or with thee beside
 And me behind her, will not fear :

For I that danced her on my knee,
 That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,
 That shielded all her life from harm
 At last must part with her to thee ;

Now waiting to be made a wife,
 Her feet, my darling, on the dead ;
 Their pensive tablets round her head,
 And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
 The 'wilt thou' answer'd, and again
 The 'wilt thou' ask'd, till out of
 twain

Her sweet 'I will' has made you one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read,
 Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
 By village eyes as yet unborn ;
 The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
 The joy to every wandering breeze ;
 The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
 The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
 Await them. Many a merry face
 Salutes them—maidens of the place,
 That put us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
 With him to whom her hand I gave.
 They leave the porch, they pass the
 grave
 That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
 For them the light of life increased,
 Who stay to share the morning
 feast,
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
 To meet and greet a whiter sun ;
 My drooping memory will not shun
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
 And hearts are warm'd and faces
 bloom,
 As drinking health to bride and
 groom
 We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,
 Perchance, perchance, among the
 rest,
 And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
 And those white-favour'd horses wait ;
 They rise, but linger ; it is late ;
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
 From little cloudlets on the grass,
 But sweeps away as out we pass
 To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
 And talk of others that are wed,
 And how she look'd, and what he
 said,
 And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
 The shade of passing thought, the
 wealth
 Of words and wit, the double health,
 The crowning cup, the three-times-three,

And last the dance ;—till I retire :
 Dumb is that tower which spake so
 loud,
 And high in heaven the streaming
 cloud,
 And on the downs a rising fire :

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,
 Till over down and over dale
 All night the shining vapour sail
 And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,
 And catch at every mountain head,
 And o'er the friths that branch and
 spread
 Their sleeping silver thro' the hills ;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
 With tender gloom the roof, the wall ;
 And breaking let the splendour fall
 To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
 And, star and system rolling past,
 A sun shall draw from out the vast
 And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
 Result in man, be born and think,
 And act and love, a closer link
 Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
 On knowledge ; under whose command
 Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
 Is Nature like an open book ;
 No longer half-akin to brute,
 For all we thought and loved and did,
 And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed
 Of what in them is flower and fruit ;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
 This planet, was a noble type
 Appearing ere the times were
 ripe,
 That friend of mine who lives in God,
 That God, which ever lives and loves,
 One God, one law, one element,
 And one far-off divine event,
 To which the whole creation moves.



MAUD ; A MONODRAMA.

PART I.

I.

i.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
 Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
 The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,
 And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers 'Death.'

ii.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,
 His who had given me life—O father ! O God ! was it well?—
 Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dented into the ground :
 There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down ? who knows ? for a vast speculation had fail'd,
 And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,
 And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,
 And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd
 By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,
 And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
 The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

V.

Villainy somewhere ! whose ? One says, we are villains all.
 Not he : his honest fame should at least by me be maintained :
 But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,
 Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,
 Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own ;
 And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse
 Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone ?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,
 When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?
 Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
 The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
 Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust ;
 May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,
 Cheat and be cheated, and die : who knows? we are ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
 When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
 When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie ;
 Peace in her vineyard—yes !—but a company forges the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,
 Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,
 And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
 And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous centre-bits
 Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,
 While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits
 To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
 And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,
 Is it peace or war? better, war ! loud war by land and by sea,
 War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
 And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
 That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
 And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home.—

XIV.

What ! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood ?
 Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die
 Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood
 On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie ?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me* ? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,
 Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—
 Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak
 And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.
 Why should I stay ? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here ?
 O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,
 Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear ?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall !—they are coming back from abroad ;
 The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire :
 I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud ;
 I play'd with the girl when a child ; she promised then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,
 Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
 Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,
 Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

XIX.

What is she now ? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.
 No, there is fatter game on the moor ; she will let me alone.
 Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.
 I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm : God grant I may find it at last !
 It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savour nor salt,
 But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
 Perfectly beautiful : let it be granted her : where is the fault ?
 All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)
 Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
 Dead perfection, no more ; nothing more, if it had not been

For a change of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the nose,
 Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,
 Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,
 From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen.

III.

Cold and chiselled face, why come you so cruelly meek,
 Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,
 Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
 Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound ;
 Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong
 Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before
 Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,
 Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long
 Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,
 But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,
 Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar,
 Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
 Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV

I.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
 In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
 Half-lust in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
 The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land ?

II.

Behold me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small !
 And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite ;
 And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a CAT ;
 And here on the landward dikes by a red rock, glimmers the Hall ;
 And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light ;
 But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star !

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the man ?
 I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd :

I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor ;
 But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.
 O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud ;
 Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal ;
 I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like
 A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way :
 For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal ;
 The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shriek,
 And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower ;
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed ?
 Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour ;
 We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame ;
 However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
 For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
 And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man :
 He now is first, but is he the last ? is he not too base ?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
 An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor ;
 The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain ;
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more
 Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.
 Shall I weep if a Poland fall ? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail ?
 Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with knout ?
 I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,
 Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hubbub of lies ;
 From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise
 Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,
 Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,
 The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.
 Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.
 Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above ;
 Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will ;—
 You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

A voice by the cedar tree
 In the meadow under the Hall !
 She is singing an air that is known to me,
 A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
 A martial song like a trumpet's call !
 Singing alone in the morning of life,
 In the happy morning of life and of May,
 Singing of men that in battle array,
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,
 March with banner and bugle and fife
 To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
 And wild voice pealing up to the sunny
 sky,
 And feet like sunny gems on an English
 green,
 Maud in the light of her youth and her
 grace,
 Singing of Death, and of Honour that
 cannot die,
 Till I well could weep for a time so sordid
 and mean,
 And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice !
 Be still, for you only trouble the mind
 With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
 A glory I shall not find.
 Still ! I will hear you no more,
 For your sweetness hardly leaves me a
 choice
 But to move to the meadow and fall before
 Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
 Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
 Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

Morning arises stormy and pale,
 No sun, but a wannish glare
 In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
 And the budded peaks of the wood are
 bow'd
 Caught and cuff'd by the gale :
 I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
 Last night, when the sunset burn'd
 On the blossom'd gable-ends

At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so
sweet,
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my
dreams,
Ready to burst in a colour'd flame;
Till at last when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a snare
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
Of a kind intent to me,
What if that dandy-despot, he,
That jewell'd mass of millinery,
That wild and wild Assyrian Bull

Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—
What if he had told her yesternorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings shake
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and
ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and good?
Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot
mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is
thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?

For what was it else within me wrought
 But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,
 That made my tongue so stammer and
 trip

When I saw the treasured splendour, her
 hand,

Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
 And the sunlight broke from her lip?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
 She remembers it now we meet.
 Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
 By some coquettish deceit.
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,
 And her smile had all that I dream'd,
 Then the world were not so bitter
 But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

Did I hear it half in a doze
 Long since, I know not where ?
 Did I dream it an hour ago,
 When asleep in this arm-chair ?

II.

Men were drinking together,
 Drinking and talking of me ;
 'Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
 Will have plenty : so let it be.'

III.

Is it an echo of something
 Read with a boy's delight,
 Viciars nodding together
 In some Arabian night ?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
 Somewhere, talking of me ;
 'Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
 Will have plenty : so let it be.'

VIII.

She came to the village church,
 And sat by a pillar alone ;
 An angel watching ~~an hour~~
 Wept over her, carved in stone ;
 And once, but ~~once~~, she lifted her eyes,
 And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd
 To find they were ~~not~~ by my own ;
 And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat
 stronger
 And thicker, until I heard no longer
 The snowy-banded, dilettante,
 Delicate-handed priest intone ;
 And thought, is it pride, and mused and
 sigh'd
 'No surely, now it cannot be pride.'

IX.

I was walking a mile,
 More than a mile from the shore,
 The sun look'd out with a smile
 Betwixt the cloud and the moor,
 And riding at set of day
 Over the dark moor land,
 Rapidly riding far away,
 She waved to me with her hand.
 There were two at her side,
 Something flash'd in the sun,
 Down by the hill I saw them ride,
 In a moment they were gone :
 Like a sudden spark
 Struck vainly in the night,
 Then returns the dark
 With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread ?
 Was not one of the two at her side
 This new-made lord, whose splendour
 plucks

The slavish hat from the villager's head?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted
mine

Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a
bride.

Blithe would her brother's acceptance be.
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as
well:

This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy
things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,
and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This huckster put down war! can he tell
Whether war be a cause or a consequence?
Put down the passions that make earth
Hell!

Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy!
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be!

XI.

I.

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet;

Then let come what come may,
 What matter if I go mad,
 I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
 Not close and darken above me
 Before I am quite once sure
 That there is one to love me ;
 Then let come what come may
 To a life that has been so sad,
 I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
 When twilight was falling,
 Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
 They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud ? in our wood ;
 And I, who else, was with her,
 Gathering woodland lilies,
 Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
 Ringing thro' the valleys,
 Maud is here, here, here
 In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
 She took the kiss sedately ;
 Maud is not seventeen,
 But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
 Who have won her favour !
 O Maud were sure of Heaven
 If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
 Home with her mignon pucey,
 For her feet have trod the meadows
 And left the daisies pucey.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
 Were crying and calling to her,
 Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
 One is come to woo her ?

VIII.

Lord, a horse at the door,
 And little King Charley snarling,
 Go back, my lord, across the moor,
 You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,
 Is that a matter to make me fret ?
 That a calamity hard to be borne ?
 Well, he may live to hate me yet.
 Fool that I am to be vex'd with his pride !
 I past him, I was crossing his land ;
 He stood on the path a little aside ;
 His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
 Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and
 white,
 And six feet two, as I think, he stands ;
 But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
 And barbarous opulence jewel-thick
 Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
 I long'd so heartily them and there
 To give him the grasp of fellowship ;
 But while I past he was humming an air,
 Stopp'd, and then with a riding whip
 Leisurly tapping a glossy boot

And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonised me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place:
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his
face,

A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet:
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his sister smiled on me?

XIV.

1.

Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carved gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books,
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company) looks
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as
white

As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the hasp of the window, and my
Delight
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost,
to glide,
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down
to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it
swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn
But I look'd, and round, all round the
house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain meant
but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool
of the sleep of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
 And I make myself such evil cheer,
 That if I be dear to some one else,
 Then some one else may have much to
 fear ;
 But if I be dear to some one else,
 Then I should be to myself more dear.
 Shall I not take care of all that I think,
 Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
 If I be dear,
 If I be dear to some one else.

XVI.

I.

This lump of earth has left his estate
 The lighter by the loss of his weight ;
 And so that he find what he went to seek,
 And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and
 crown
 His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
 He may stay for a year who has gone for
 a week :
 But this is the day when I must speak,
 And I see my Oread coming down,
 O this is the day !
 O beautiful creature, what am I
 That I dare to look her way ;
 Think I may hold dominion sweet,
 Lord of the pulse that is born of her breast,
 And dream of her beauty with tender dread,
 From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
 To the grace that, bright and light as the
 crest
 Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
 And she knows it not : O, if she knew it,
 To know her beauty might half undo it.
 I know it the one bright thing to save
 My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
 Perhaps from madness, perhaps from
 crime,
 Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool
 lord,
 Dare I bid her abide by her word ?
 Should I love her so well if she
 Had given her word to some thing so low ?
 Shall I love her as well if she
 Can break her word were it even for me ?
 I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
 Let not my tongue be a thrall to my
 eye,
 For I must tell her before we part,
 I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.
 When the happy Yes
 Falters from her lips,
 Pass and blush the news
 Over glowing slaps ;
 Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest.
 Pass the happy news,
 Blush it thro' the West ;
 Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree,
 And the red man's leather
 Lamp, beyond the sea.
 Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
 Till the West is East,
 Blush it thro' the West.

Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my only
 friend.
 There is none like her, none.
 And never yet so warmly ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on
 Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
 Full to the banks, close on the promised
 good.

II.

None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering
 talk
 Seem'd her light foot along the garden
 walk,
 And shook my heart to think she comes
 once more ;
 But even then I heard her close the door,
 The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is
 gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
 Nor will be when our summers have de-
 ceased.
 O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
 In the long breeze that streams to thy
 delicious East,
 Sighing for Lebanon,
 Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here in-
 creased,
 Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
 And looking to the South, and fed
 With honey'd rain and delicate air,
 And haunted by the starry head
 Of her whose gentle will has changed my
 fate,
 And made my life a perfumed altar-flame ;

And over whom thy darkness must have
 spread
 With such delight as theirs of old, thy
 great
 Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
 Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
 whom she came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long branches
 sway,
 And you fair stars that crown a happy day
 Go in and out as if at merry play,
 Who am no more so all forlorn,
 As when it seem'd far better to be born
 To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
 Than nursed at ease and brought to un-
 derstand
 A sad astrology, the boundless plan
 That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and
 brand
 His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
 Who in this stormy gulf have found a
 pearl
 The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
 And do accept my madness, and would die
 To save from some slight shame one
 simple girl.

VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death
 may give
 More life to Love than is or ever was
 In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to
 live.
 Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
 It seems that I am happy, that to me
 A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
 A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,
 And teach true life to fight with mortal
 wrongs.
 O, why should Love, like men in drinking-
 songs,
 Spice his fair banquet with the dust of
 death?
 Make answer, Maud my bliss,
 Maud made my Maud by that long lover's
 kiss,
 Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?
 'The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
 With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself
 more dear.'

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
 Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?
 And hark the clock within, the silver
 knell
 Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal
 white,
 And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
 But now by this my love has closed her
 sight
 And given false death her hand, and stol'n
 away
 To dreamful wastes where footless fancies
 dwell
 Among the fragments of the golden day.
 May nothing there her maiden grace
 affright !
 Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy
 spell.
 My bride to be, my evermore delight,
 My own heart's heart, my ownest own,
 farewell ;
 It is but for a little space I go :
 And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
 Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
 Has our whole earth gone nearer to the
 glow

Of your soft splendours that you look so
 bright?
 I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
 Beat, happy stars, boxing with things
 below,
 Beat with my heart more I lest than heart
 can tell,
 Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
 That seems to draw—but it shall not be so :
 Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

Her brother is coming back to-night,
 Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?
 I have walk'd awake with Truth.
 O when did a morning shine
 So rich in atonement as this
 For my dark-dawning youth,
 Darken'd watching a mother decline
 And that dead man at her heart and mine :
 For who was left to watch her but I?
 Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk
 To gentle Maud in our walk
 (For often in lonely wanderings
 I have cursed him even to lifeless things)
 But I trust that I did not talk,
 Not touch on her father's sin :
 I am sure I did but speak
 Of my mother's faded cheek
 When it slowly grew so thin,
 That I felt she was slowly dying
 Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt :
 For how often I caught her with eyes all
 wet,
 Shaking her head at her son and sighing
 A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
 To speak of the mother she loved
 As one scarce less forlorn,
 Dying abroad and it seems apart
 From him who had ceased to share her
 heart,

And ever mourning over the feud,
 The household Fury sprinkled with blood
 By which our houses are torn :
 How strange was what she said,
 When only Maud and the brother
 Hung over her dying bed—
 That Maud's dark father and mine
 Had bound us one to the other,
 Betrothed us over their wine,
 On the day when Maud was born ;
 Seal'd her mine from her first sweet
 breath.

Mine, mine by a right, from birth till
 death.

Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
 To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
 That, if left uncancell'd, had been so
 sweet :

And none of us thought of a something
 beyond,

A desire that awoke in the heart of the
 child,

As it were a duty done to the tomb,
 To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled ;
 And I was cursing them and my doom,
 And letting a dangerous thought run wild
 While often abroad in the fragrant gloom
 Of foreign churches—I see her there,
 Bright English lily, breathing a prayer
 To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
 Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,

I find whenever she touch'd on me
 This brother had laugh'd her down,
 And at last, when each came home,
 He had darken'd into a frown,
 Chid her, and forbid her to speak
 To me, her friend of the years before ;
 And this was what had reddened her
 cheek

When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
 To the faults of his heart and mind,
 I see she cannot but love him,
 And says he is rough but kind,
 And wishes me to approve him,
 And tells me, when she lay
 Sick once, with a fear of worse,
 That he left his wine and horses and play,
 Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
 And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind? but the deathbed desire
 Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—
 Rough but kind? yet I know
 He has plotted against me in this,
 That he plots against me still.
 Kind to Maud? that were not amiss.
 Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :
 For shall not Maud have her will?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
 As long as my life endures
 I feel I shall owe you a debt,
 That I never can hope to pay ;
 And if ever I should forget
 That I owe this debt to you
 And for your sweet sake to yours ;
 O then, what then shall I say?—
 If ever I *should* forget,
 May God make me more wretched
 Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
 All this dead body of hate,
 I feel so free and so clear
 By the loss of that dead weight,
 That I should grow light-headed, I fear,
 Fantastically merry ;
 But that her brother comes, like a blight
 On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,
 Strange, that I tried to-day
 To beguile her melancholy ;
 The Sultan, as we name him,—
 She did not wish to blame him—
 But he vexed her and perplexed her
 With his worldly talk and folly :
 Was it gentle to reprove her
 For stealing out of view
 From a little lazy lover
 Who but claims her as his due ?
 Or for chilling his caresses
 By the coldness of her manners,
 Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?
 Now I know her but in two,
 Nor can pronounce upon it
 If one should ask me whether
 The habit, hat, and feather,
 Or the frock and gipsy bonnet
 Be the neater and completer ;
 For nothing can be sweeter
 Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
 Our ponderous squire will give
 A grand political dinner
 To half the 'squirelings near ;
 And Maud will wear her jewels,
 And the bird of prey will hover,

And the titmouse hope to win her
 With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
 To the men of many acres,
 A gathering of the Tory,
 A dinner and then a dance
 For the maids and marriage-makers,
 And every eye but mine will glance
 At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
 But, with the Sultan's pardon,
 I am all as well delighted,
 For I know her own rose-garden,
 And mean to linger in it
 Till the dancing will be over ;
 And then, oh then, come out to me
 For a minute, but for a minute,
 Come out to your own true lover,
 That your true lover may see
 Your glory also, and render
 All homage to his own darling,
 Queen Maud in all her splendour.

XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,
 And bringing me down from the Hall
 This garden-rose that I found,
 Forgetful of Maud and me,
 And lost in trouble and moving round
 Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
 And trying to pass to the sea ;
 O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
 My Maud has sent it by thee
 (If I read her sweet will right)
 On a blushing mission to me,
 Saying in odour and colour, ' Ah, be
 Among the roses to-night.'

XXII.

I.

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone ;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted
 abroad,
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the plaudit of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she
 loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon ;
 All night has the casement jessamine
 stirr'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune ;
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, ' There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her alone ?
 She is weary of dance and play.'
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day ;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, ' The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine ?
 But mine, but mine, ' so I swear to the rose,
 ' For ever and ever, mine.'

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my
 blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall ;
 And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to
 the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left
 so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
 One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,
 Knowing your promise to me ;
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of
 girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
 Queen lily and rose in one ;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate.
 She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
 She is coming, my life, my fate ;

The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near ;'

And the white rose weeps, 'She is late ;'

The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear ;'

And the Lily whispers, 'I wait.'

87.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;

Were it ever so airy a treat,

My heart would hear her and beat,

Were it earth in an earthy bed ;

My dust would hear her and beat,

Had I lain for a century dead ;

Would I start and tremble under her feet,

And blossom in purple and red.

PART II.

I.

I.

'THE fault was mine, the fault was mine'—

Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,

Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?—

Is this guilty hand!—

And there rises ever a passionate cry

From underneath in the darkening land—

What is it, that has been done?

O dawn of Fates bright over earth and sky,

The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate ;

For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,

When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord ;

Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,

And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,

Till I with as fierce an anger spoke.

And he struck me, madman, over the face,

Struck me before the languid fool,

Who was gaping and grinning by :

Struck for himself an evil stroke ;

Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe ;

For front to front in an hour we stood,

And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,

That must have life for a blow.

Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye?

'The fault was mine,' he whisper'd, 'fly!'

Then glided out of the joyous wood

The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ;

And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,

A cry for a brother's blood :

It will ring in my heart and my ears, till

I die, till I die.

II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—

What was it? a lying trick of the brain?

Yes: I thought I saw her stand,

A shadow there at my feet,

High over the shadowy land.

It is gone; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,

When they should burst and drown with deluging storms—

The feeble vassals of wine and anger and lust.

The little hearts that know not how to forgive :

Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold

Thee just.

Strike dead the whole weak race of veno-

mous worms.

That sting each other here in the dust ;
We are not worthy to live.

II.

1.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill ?
Did he push, when he was uncur'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world ?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand !

V.

Breton, not Briton ; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear—
Plagued with a fitting to and fro,

A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main—
Why should it look like Maud ?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain ?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost ;
An old song vexes my ear ;
But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part—
But she, she would love me still ;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by !
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and
thought
It is his mother's hair.

IX.

Who knows if he be dead?
 Whether I need have fled?
 Am I guilty of blood?
 However this may be,
 Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,
 While I am over the sea!
 Let me and my passionate love go by,
 But speak to her all things holy and high,
 Whatever happen to me!
 Me and my harmful love go by;
 But come to her waking, find her asleep,
 Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
 And comfort her tho' I die.

III.

Courage, poor heart of stone!
 I will not ask thee why
 Thou canst not understand
 That thou art left for ever alone:
 Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
 Or if I ask thee why,
 Care not thou to reply:
 She is but dead, and the time is at hand
 When thou shalt more than die.

IV.

I.

O that 'twere possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again!

II.

When I was wont to meet her
 In the silent woody places
 By the home that gave me birth,
 We stood traced in long embraces
 Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter
 Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
 Not thou, but like to thee:

Ah Christ, that it were possible
 For one short hour to see
 The souls we loved, that they might tell us
 What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
 It lightly winds and steals
 In a cold white robe before me,
 When all my spirit reels
 At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
 And the roaring of the wheels.

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
 Half in dreams I sorrow after
 The delight of early skies;
 In a wakeful daze I sorrow
 For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
 For the meeting of the morrow,
 The delight of happy laughter,
 The delight of low replies.

VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And a dewy splendour falls
 On the little flower that cling
 To the turrets and the walls;
 'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And the light and shadow fleet;
 She is walking in the meadow,
 And the woodland echo rings;
 In a moment we shall meet;
 She is singing in the meadow
 And the rivulet at her feet
 Ripples on in light and shadow
 To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
 My bird with the shining head,
 My own dove with the tender eye?
 But there rings on a sudden a passionate
 cry,
 There is some one dying or dead,

And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;
 For a tumult shakes the city,
 And I wake, my dream is fled ;
 In the shuddering dawn, behold,
 Without knowledge, without pity,
 By the curtains of my bed
 That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
 Mix not memory with doubt,
 Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
 Pass and cease to move about !
 'Tis the blot upon the brain
 That *will* show itself without.

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
 And the yellow vapours choke
 The great city sounding wide ;
 The day comes, a dull red ball
 Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
 On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
 I steal, a wasted frame,
 It crosses here, it crosses there,
 Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
 The shadow still the same ;
 And on my heavy eyelids
 My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
 That heard me softly call,
 Came glimmering thro' the laurels
 At the quiet evenfall,
 In the garden by the turrets
 Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
 From the realms of light and song,
 In the chamber or the street,
 As she looks among the blest,

Should I fear to greet my friend
 Or to say 'forgive the wrong,'
 Or to ask her, 'Take me, sweet,
 To the regions of thy rest ?'

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
 And the shadow flits and fleets
 And will not let me be ;
 And I loathe the squares and streets,
 And the faces that one meets,
 Hearts with no love for me :
 Always I long to creep
 Into some still cavern deep,
 There to weep, and weep, and weep
 My whole soul out to thee.

V.

i.

Dead, long dead,
 Long dead !
 And my heart is a handful of dust,
 And the wheels go over my head,
 And my bones are shaken with pain,
 For into a shallow grave they are thrust,
 Only a yard beneath the street,
 And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
 The hoofs of the horses beat,
 Beat into my scalp and my brain,
 With never an end to the stream of passing
 feet,
 Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,
 Clamour and rumble, and ringing and
 clatter,
 And here beneath it is all as bad,
 For I thought the dead had peace, but it
 is not so ;
 To have no peace in the grave, is that
 not sad ?
 But up and down and to and fro,
 Ever about me the dead men go ;
 And then to hear a dead man chatter
 Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,
 They cannot even bury a man ;
 And tho' we paid our tithes in the days
 that are gone,
 Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was
 read ;
 It is that which makes us loud in the
 world of the dead ;
 There is none that does his work, not
 one ;
 A touch of their office might have sufficed,
 But the churchmen fain would kill their
 church,
 As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,
 No limit to his distress ;
 And another, a lord of all things, praying
 To his own great self, as I guess ;
 And another, a statesman there, betraying
 His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
 And yonder a vile physician, blabbing
 The case of his patient—all for what ?
 To tickle the maggot born in an empty
 head,
 And wheedle a world that loves him not
 For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
 For the prophecy given of old
 And then not understood,
 Has come to pass as foretold ;
 Not let any man think for the public good,
 But babble, merely for babble.
 For I never whisper'd a private affair
 Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
 No, not to myself in the closet alone,
 But I heard it shouted at once from the
 top of the house ;
 Everything came to be known
 Who told *him* we were there ?

V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not
 back
 From the wilderness, full of wolves, where
 he used to be ;
 He has gather'd the bones for his o'er-
 grown whelp to crack ;
 Crack them now for yourself, and howl,
 and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
 And curse me the British vermin, the rat ;
 I know not whether he came in the
 Hanover ship,
 But I know that he lies and listens mute
 In an ancient mansion's crannies and
 holes :
 Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
 Except that now we poison our babes,
 poor souls !
 It is all used up for that.

VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at my
 head ;
 Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
 He may take her now ; for she never
 speaks her mind,
 But is ever the one thing silent here.
 She is not of us, as I divine ;
 She comes from another stiller world of
 the dead,
 Still, not fairer than mine.

VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,
 Fairer than aught in the world beside,
 All made up of the lily and rose
 That blow by night, when the season is
 good,
 To the sound of dancing music and flutes :
 It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
 And I almost fear they are not roses, but
 blood ;

For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
 He linkt a dead man there to a spectral
 bride ;
 For he, if he had not been a Sultan of
 brutes,
 Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
 He laid a cruel snare in a pit
 To catch a friend of mine one stormy
 day ;
 Yet now I could even weep to think of it ;
 For what will the old man say
 When he comes to the second corpse in
 the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,
 Then to strike him and lay him low,

That were a public merit, far,
 Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;
 But the red life spilt for a private blow—
 I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
 Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me deep
 enough ?
 Is it kind to have made me a grave so
 rough,
 Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?
 Maybe still I am but half-dead ;
 Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;
 I will cry to the steps above my head
 And somebody, surely, some kind heart
 will come
 To bury me, bury me
 Deeper, ever so little deeper.

PART III.

VI.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
 Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,
 That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :
 My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
 When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
 And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
 And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
 Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
 That like a silent lightning under the stars
 She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,
 And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—
 ' And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,
 Knowing I tarry for thee,' and pointed to Mars
 As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight
 To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,
 That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;
 And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair
 When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the right,
 That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,

The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,
 Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :
 No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
 Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
 And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
 Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
 And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat
 Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,
 'It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I
 (For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),
 'It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,
 That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'
 And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath
 With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,
 Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly
 Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
 Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
 And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,
 Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;
 And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !
 Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
 For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,
 Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;
 And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
 And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
 And noble thought be freer under the sun,
 And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;
 For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,
 And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
 And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
 The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind,
 We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,
 And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind ;
 It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill ;
 I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind,
 I embrace the purpose of God, and the claim assigned.

IDYLLS OF THE KING.

DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he held
 them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls.

 And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
'Who revered his conscience as his
 king ;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong ;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd
 to it ;
Who loved one only and who clave to
 her—'
Her—over all whose realms to their last
 isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent
 war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost
 him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,
 wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;
Not making his high place the lawless
 perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-
 ground
For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract of
 years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless
 life,

Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a
 throne,
And blackens every blot : for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than his ?
Or how should England dreaming of *his*
 sons
Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor—
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day—
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince
 indeed,
Beyond all titles, and a household name,
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the
 Good.

 Break not, O woman's-heart, but still
 endure ;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that
 ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendour.

 May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all Thy daughters cherish
 Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again !

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other
child ;
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land ;
And still from time to time the heathen
host

Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was
left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilder-
ness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and
more,

But man was less and less, till Arthur
came.
For first Aurelius lived and fought and
died,

And after him King Uther fought and died,
But either fail'd to make the kingdom
one.

And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table
Round,

Drew all their petty principedoms under
him,
Their king and head, and made a realm,
and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was
waste,
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast
therein,
And none or few to scare or chase the
beast ;
So that wild dog, and wolf and boar and
bear

Came night and day, and rooted in the
fields,

And wallow'd in the gardens of the King.
And ever and anon the wolf would steal
The children and devour, but now and
then,

Her own brood lost or dead, lent her
fierce teat

To human sucklings ; and the children,
housed

In her foul den, there at their meat would
growl,

And mock their foster-mother on four feet,
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-
like men,

Worse than the wolves. And King
Leodogran

Groan'd for the Roman legions here again,
And Cæsar's eagle : then his brother king,
Urien, assail'd him : last a heathen horde,
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth
with blood,

And on the spike that split the mother's
heart

Spitting the child, brake on him, till,
amazed,

He knew not whither he should turn for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly
crown'd,

Tho' not without an uproar made by those
Who cried, 'He is not Uther's son'—the
King

Sent to him, saying, 'Arise, and help us
thou !

For here between the man and beast we
die.'

And Arthur yet had done no deed of
arms,

But heard the call, and came : and
 Guinevere
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him
 pass ;
 But since he neither wore on helm or
 shield
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
 But rode a simple knight among his
 knights,
 And many of these in richer arms than he,
 She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she
 saw,
 One among many, tho' his face was bare.
 But Arthur, looking downward as he past,
 Felt the light of her eyes into his life
 Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and
 pitch'd
 His tents beside the forest. Then he
 drave
 The heathen, after, slew the beast, and
 fell'd
 The forest, letting in the sun, and made
 Broad pathways for the hunter and the
 knight
 And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
 A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the hearts
 Of those great Lords and Barons of his
 realm
 Flash'd forth and into war : for most of
 these,
 Colleagueing with a score of petty kings,
 Made head against him, crying, 'Who
 is he
 That he should rule us ? who hath proven
 him
 King Uther's son ? for lo ! we look at
 him,
 And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor
 voice,
 Are like to those of Uther whom we
 knew.

This is the son of Gorloïs, not the King ;
 This is the son of Anton, not the King.'

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,
 felt
 Travail, and throes and agonies of the
 life,
 Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere ;
 And thinking as he rode, ' Her father said
 That there between the man and beast
 they die.
 Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts
 Up to my throne, and side by side with
 me ?
 What happiness to reign a lonely king,
 Vext—O ye stars that shudder over me,
 O earth that soundest hollow under me,
 Vext with waste dreams ? for saving I be
 join'd
 To her that is the fairest under heaven,
 I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
 And cannot will my will, nor work my
 work
 Wholly, nor make myself in mine own
 realm
 Victor and lord. But were I join'd with
 her,
 Then might we live together as one life,
 And reigning with one will in everything
 Have power on this dark land to lighten
 it,
 And power on this dead world to make it
 live.'

Thereafter—as he speaks who tells the
 tale—
 When Arthur reach'd a field-of-battle
 bright
 With pitch'd pavilions of his foe, the
 world
 Was all so clear about him, that he saw
 The smallest rock far on the faintest hill,
 And even in high day the morning star.

So when the King had set his banner
broad,
At once from either side, with trumpet-
blast,
And shouts, and clarions shrilling unto
blood,
The long-lanced battle let their horses
run.
And now the Barons and the kings pre-
vail'd,
And now the King, as here and there
that war
Went swaying; but the Powers who walk
the world
Made lightnings and great thunders over
him,
And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by main
might,
And mightier of his hands with every
blow,
And leading all his knighthood threw the
kings
Carádos, Urien, Cradlefont of Wales,
Claudias, and Clariance of Northumber-
land,
The King Brandagoras of Latangor,
With Anguisant of Erin, Morganore,
And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a voice
As dreadful as the shout of one who sees
To one who sins, and deems himself alone
And all the world asleep, they swerved
and brake
Flying, and Arthur call'd to stay the
brands
That hack'd among the flyers, 'Ho! they
yield!'
So like a painted battle the war stood
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,
And in the heart of Arthur joy was lord.
He laugh'd upon his warrior whom he
loved
And honour'd most. 'Thou dost not
doubt me King,

So well thine arm hath wrought for me
to-day.'
'Sir and my liege,' he cried, 'the fire of
God
Descends upon thee in the battle-field:
I know thee for my King!' Whereat the
two,
For each had warded either in the fight,
Swore on the field of death a deathless
love.
And Arthur said, 'Man's word is God in
man:
Let chance what will, I trust thee to the
death.'

Then quickly from the foughthen field
he sent
Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
His new-made knights, to King Leode-
gran,
Saying, 'If I in aught have served thee
well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife.'

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in
heart
Debating—'How should I that am a
king,
However much he help me at my need,
Give my one daughter saving to a king,
And a king's son?'—lifted his voice, and
call'd
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom
He trusted all things, and of him required
His counsel: 'Knowest thou aught of
Arthur's birth?'

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and
said,
'Sir King, there be but two old men that
know:
And each is twice as old as I; and one
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever served

King Uther thro' his magic art ; and one
 Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys,
 Who taught him magic ; but the scholar
 ran
 Before the master, and so far, that Bleys
 Laid magic by, and sat him down, and
 wrote
 All things and whatsoever Merlin did
 In one great annal-book, where after-
 years
 Will learn the secret of our Arthur's
 birth.'

To whom the King Leodogran replied,
 'O friend, had I been holpen half as well
 By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,
 Then beast and man had had their share
 of me :
 But summon here before us yet once more
 Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere.'

Then, when they came before him, the
 King said,
 'I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser
 fowl,
 And reason in the chase : but wherefore
 now
 Do these your lords stir up the heat of
 war,
 Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,
 Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-
 selves,
 Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?'

And Ulfius and Brastias answer'd,
 'Ay.'
 Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights
 Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,
 spake—
 For bold in heart and act and word was
 he,
 Whenever slander breathed against the
 King—

'Sir, there be many rumours on this
 head :
 For there be those who hate him in their
 hearts,
 Call him baseborn, and since his ways
 are sweet,
 And theirs are bestial, hold him less than
 man :
 And there be those who deem him more
 than man,
 And dream he dropt from heaven : but
 my belief
 In all this matter—so ye care to learn—
 Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's
 time
 The prince and warrior Gorlois, he that
 held
 Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
 Was wedded with a winsome wife,
 Ygerne :
 And daughters had she borne him,—one
 whereof,
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
 cent,
 Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved
 To Arthur,—but a son she had not borne.
 And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :
 But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,
 So loathed the bright dishonour of his
 love,
 That Gorlois and King Uther went to
 war :
 And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.
 Then Uther in his wrath and heat besieged
 Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,
 Seeing the mighty swarm about their
 walls,
 Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in,
 And there was none to call to but himself.
 So, compass'd by the power of the King,
 Enforced she was to wed him in her tears,
 And with a shameful swiftness : after-
 ward,

Not many moons, King Uther died him-
self,

Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
After him, lest the realm should go to
wrack.

And that same night, the night of the new
year,

By reason of the bitterness and grief
That vext his mother, all before his time
Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born
Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate
To Merlin, to be holden far apart

Until his hour should come ; because the
lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of this,
Wild beasts, and surely would have torn
the child

Piecemeal among them, had they known ;
for each

But sought to rule for his own self and
hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake
Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the
child,

And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight
And ancient friend of Uther ; and his wife
Nursed the young prince, and rear'd him
with her own ;

And no man knew. And ever since the
lords

Have foughten like wild beasts among
themselves,

So that the realm has gone to wrack :
but now,

This year, when Merlin (for his hour had
come)

Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the
hall,

Proclaiming, " Here is Uther's heir, your
king,"

A hundred voices cried, " Away with him!
No king of ours ! a son of Gorlois he,
Or else the child of Anton, and no king,

Or else baseborn." Yet Merlin thro' his
craft,

And while the people clamour'd for a
king,

Had Arthur crown'd ; but after, the great
lords

Banded, and so brake out in open war.'

Then while the King debated with
himself

If Arthur were the child of shameful
ness,

Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,
Or Uther's son, and born before his time,

Or whether there were truth in anything
Said by these three, there came to Came-
liard,

With Gawain and young Modred, her two
sons,

Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
cent ;

Whom as he could, not as he would, the
King

Made feast for, saying, as they sat at
meat,

' A doubtful throne is ice on summer
seas.

Ye come from Arthur's court. Victor his
men

Report him ! Yea, but ye—think ye this
king—

So many those that hate him, and so
strong,

So few his knights, however brave they
be—

Hath ~~body~~ ~~enow~~ to hold his foemen
down ?'

' O King,' she cried, ' and I will tell
thee : few,

Few, but all brave, all of one mind with
him ;

For I was near him when the savage yells
 Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur sat
 Crown'd on the dais, and his warriors cried,
 "Be thou the king, and we will work thy
 will
 Who love thee." Then the King in low
 deep tones,
 And simple words of great authority,
 Bound them by so strait vows to his own
 self,
 That when they rose, knighted from
 kneeling, some
 Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
 Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one
 who wakes
 Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

'But when he spake and cheer'd his
 Table Round

With large divine and comfortable words
 Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I beheld
 From eye to eye thro' all their Order flash
 A momentary likeness of the King :
 And ere it left their faces, thro' the cross
 And those around it and the Crucified,
 Down from the casement over Arthur,
 smote
 Flame-colour, vert and azure, in three
 rays,
 One falling upon each of three fair queens,
 Who stood in silence near his throne, the
 friends
 Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
 Sweet faces, who will help him at his
 need.

'And there I saw mage Merlin, whose
 vast wit
 And hundred winters are but as the hands
 Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

'And near him stood the Lady of the
 Lake,

Who knows a subtler magic than his
 own—

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
 ful.

She gave the King his huge cross-hilted
 sword,

Whereby to drive the heathen out : a mist
 Of incense curl'd about her, and her face
 Wellnigh was hidden in the minster
 gloom ;

But there was heard among the holy
 hymns

A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
 Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever storms
 May shake the world, and when the
 surface rolls,

Hath power to walk the waters like our
 Lord.

'There likewise I beheld Excalibur
 Before him at his crowning borne, the
 sword

That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
 And Arthur row'd across and took it—rich
 With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
 Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so
 bright

That men are blinded by it—on one side,
 Graven in the oldest tongue of all this
 world,

"Take me," but turn the blade and ye
 shall see,

And written in the speech ye speak your-
 self,

"Cast me away !" And sad was Arthur's
 face

Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,
 "Take thou and strike ! the time to cast
 away

Is yet far-off." So this great brand the
 king

Took, and by this will beat his foemen
 down.'

Thereat Lessingran rejoiced, but
thought

To sift his doubtings to the last, and ask'd,
Fixing full eyes of question on her face,

'The swallow and the swift are near akin,
But thou art closer to this noble prince,

Being his own dear sister; 'and she said,
'Daughter of Gorlus and Ygerne am I;

'And therefore Arthur's sister?' ask'd
the King.

She answer'd, 'These be secret things,'
and sign'd

To those two sons to pass and let them be.
And Gawain went, and breaking into song

Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying hair
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw :

Big Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
And there half heard; the same that

afterward
Stuck for the throne, and striking found

his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,
'What know I?

I am dark my mother was in eyes and hair,
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark

Was Gorlus, yea and dark was Uther too,
Wellnigh to blackness; but this King is

fair
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.

Moreover, always in my mind I hear
A cry from out the dawning of my life,

A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
'O that ye had some brother, pretty one,

To guard thee on the rough ways of the
world.'"

'Ay,' said the King, 'and hear ye
such a cry?

But when did Arthur chance upon thee
first?'

'O King!' she cried, 'and I will tell
thee true :

He found me first when yet a little maid ;
Beaten I had been for a little fault

Whereof I was not guilty ; and out I ran
And flung myself down on a bank of

heath,
And hated this fair world and all therein,

And wept, and wish'd that I were dead ;
and he—

I know not whether of himself he came,
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,

can walk
Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side

And spake sweet words, and comforted
my heart,

And dried my tears, being a child with me.
And many a time he came, and evermore

As I grew greater grew with me ; and sad
At times he seem'd, and sad with him

was I,
Stern too at times, and then I loved him

not,
But sweet again, and then I loved him

well.
And now of late I see him less and less,

But those first days had golden hours for
me,

For then I surely thought he would be
king.

'But let me tell thee now another tale :
For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they

say,
Died but of late, and sent his cry to me,

To hear him speak before he left his life.
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the

mage ;
And when I enter'd told me that himself

And Merlin ever served about the King,
Uther, before he died ; and on the night

When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two

Left the still King, and passing forth to
breathe,

Then from the castle gateway by the
 chasm
 Descending thro' the dismal night—a
 night
 In which the bounds of heaven and earth
 were lost—
 Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps
 It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape
 thereof
 A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to
 stern
 Bright with a shining people on the decks,
 And gone as soon as seen. And then the two
 Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the great
 sea fall.
 Wave after wave, each mightier than the
 last,
 Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the
 deep
 And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
 Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
 And down the wave and in the flame was
 borne
 A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
 Who stoopt and caught the babe, and
 cried "The King!
 Here is an heir for Uther!" And the
 fringe
 Of that great breaker, sweeping up the
 strand,
 Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the word,
 And all at once all round him rose in fire,
 So that the child and he were clothed in
 fire.
 And presently thereafter follow'd calm,
 Free sky and stars: "And this same
 child," he said,
 "Is he who reigns; nor could I part in
 peace
 Till this were told." And saying this the
 seer
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of
 death,

Not ever to be question'd any more
 Save on the further side; but when I met
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were
 truth—
 The shining dragon and the naked child
 Descending in the glory of the seas—
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd
 me
 In riddling triplets of old time, and said:
 "Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in
 the sky!
 A young man will be wiser by and by;
 An old man's wit may wander ere he die.
 Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the
 lea!
 And truth is this to me, and that to thee;
 And truth or clothed or naked let it be.
 Rain, sun, and rain! and the free
 blossom blows:
 Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he
 who knows?
 From the great deep to the great deep he
 goes."
 "So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but
 thou
 Fear not to give this King thine only child,
 Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing
 Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old
 Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of
 men,
 And echo'd by old folk beside their fires
 For comfort after their wage-work is done,
 Speak of the King; and Merlin in our
 time
 Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
 Tho' men may wound him that he will
 not die,
 But pass, again to come; and then or now
 Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
 Till these and all men hail him for their
 king.'

She spake and King Leodogran re-
joiced,
Ere musing 'Shall I answer yea or nay?'
Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept,
and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,
Field after field, up to a height, the peak
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom
king,
Now looming, and now lost; and on the
slope
The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd
was driven,
Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof
and rick,
In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,
Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with
the haze
And made it thicker; while the phantom
king
Sent out at times a voice; and here or
there
Stood one who pointed toward the voice,
the rest
Slew on and burnt, crying, 'No king of
ours,
No son of Uther, and no king of ours;'
Till with a wink his dream was changed,
the haze
Descended, and the solid earth became
As nothing, but the King stood out in
heaven,
Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and
sent
Ulfius, and Brastias and Bedivere,
Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.
Then Arthur charged his warrior whom
he loved
And honour'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride
forth
And bring the Queen;—and watch'd him
from the gates:

And Lancelot past away among the
flowers,
(For then was Lancelot Aged) and return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with Guine-
vere.
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high
saint,
Chief of the church in Britain, and before
The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the
King
That morn was married, while in stainless
white,
The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him, his
knights
Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.
Far shone the fields of May thro' open
door,
The sacred altar blossom'd white with May,
The Sun of May descended on their King,
They gazed on all earth's beauty in their
Queen,
Roll'd incense, and there past along the
hymns
A voice as of the waters, while the two
Swore at the shrine of Christ a deathless
love:
And Arthur said, 'Behold, thy doom is
mine.
Let chance what will, I love thee to the
death!'
To whom the Queen replied with droop-
ing eyes,
'King and my lord, I love thee to the
death!'
And holy Dubric spread his hands and
spake,
'Reign ye, and live and love, and make
the world
Other, and may thy Queen be one with
thee,
And all this Order of thy Table Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their King

So Dubric said ; but when they left the
 shrine
 Great Lords from Rome before the portal
 stood,
 In scornful stillness gazing as they
 past ;
 Then while they paced a city all on
 fire
 With sun and cloth of gold, the trumpets
 blew,
 And Arthur's knighthood sang before the
 King :—

‘ Blow trumpet, for the world is white
 with May ;
 Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd
 away !
 Blow thro' the living world—“ Let the
 King reign.”

‘ Shall Rome or Heathen rule in
 Arthur's realm ?
 Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe upon
 helm,
 Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let the
 King reign.

‘ Strike for the King and live ! his
 knights have heard
 That God hath told the King a secret
 word,
 Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let the
 King reign.

‘ Blow trumpet ! he will lift us from
 the dust.
 Blow trumpet ! live the strength and die
 the lust !
 Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let
 the King reign.

‘ Strike for the King and die ! and if
 thou diest,

The King is King, and ever wills the
 highest.

Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let
 the King reign.

‘ Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his
 May !

Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by day !
 Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let
 the King reign.

‘ The King will follow Christ, and we
 the King

In whom high God hath breathed a secret
 thing.

Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let
 the King reign.’

So sang the knighthood, moving to
 their hall.

There at the banquet those great Lords
 from Rome,

The slowly-fading mistress of the world,
 Strode in, and claim'd their tribute as of
 yore.

But Arthur spake, ‘ Behold, for these have
 sworn

To wage my wars, and worship me their
 King ;

The old order changeth, yielding place
 to new ;

And we that fight for our fair father Christ,
 Seeing that ye be grown too weak and
 old

To drive the heathen from your Roman
 wall,

No tribute will we pay :’ so those great
 lords

Draw back in wrath, and Arthur strove
 with Rome.

And Arthur and his knighthood for a
 space

Were all one will, and thro' that strength
the King
Drew in the petty prinestoms under
him,

Fought, and in twelve great battles over-
came
The heathen hordes, and made a realm
and reign'd.

THE ROUND TABLE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.
GAWAIN AND LANCELOT.
MODRED AND MERLIN.
LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

THE HOLY GRAIL.
PELLEAS AND ETТАBRE.
THE LAST TOURNAMENT.
GUINEVERE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE

THE last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful spring
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted
Pine

Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd
away.

'How he went down,' said Gareth, 'as
a false knight

Or evil king before my lance if lance
Were mine to use—O senseless cataract,
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy—
And yet thou art but swollen with cold
snows

And mine is living blood : thou dost His
will,

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I
that know,

Have strength and wit, in my good
mother's hall

Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and
whistled to—

Since the good mother holds me still a
child !

Good mother is bad mother unto me !
A worse were better ; yet no worse
would I.

Heaven yield her for it, but in me put
force

To weary her ears with one continuous
prayer,
she let me fly discaged to sweep
In ever-highering eagle-circles up
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence
swoop

Down upon all things base, and dash
them dead,

A knight of Arthur, working out his will,
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,
when he came

With Modred hither in the summertime,
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven
knight.

Modred for want of worthier was the
judge.

Then I so shook him in the saddle, he
said,

"Thou hast half prevail'd against me,"
said so—he—

Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was mute,
For he is always sullen : what care I ?

And Gareth went, and hovering round
her chair

Ask'd, 'Mother, th' ye count me still
the child,

Sweet mother, do ye love the child ?'
She laugh'd,

'Thou art but a wild-geese to question
it.'

‘ Then, mother, an ye love the child,’ he
said,
‘ Being a goose and rather tame than wild,
Hear the child’s story.’ ‘ Yea, my well-
beloved,
An ’twere but of the goose and golden
eggs.’

And Gareth answer’d her with kindling
eyes,
‘ Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg of
mine
Was finer gold than any goose can lay ;
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a palm
As glitters gilded in thy Book of Hours.
And there was ever haunting round the
palm
A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
The splendour sparkling from aloft, and
thought
“ An I could climb and lay my hand upon it,
Then were I wealthier than a leash of
kings.”
But ever when he reach’d a hand to climb,
One, that had loved him from his child-
hood, caught
And stay’d him, “ Climb not lest thou
break thy neck,
I charge thee by my love,” and so the boy,
Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake
his neck,
But brake his very heart in pining for it,
And past away.’

To whom the mother said,
‘ True love, sweet son, had risk’d himself
and climb’d,
And handed down the golden treasure to
him.’

And Gareth answer’d her with kindling
eyes,

‘ Gold ? said I gold ?—ay then, why he,
or she,
Or whosoe’er it was, or half the world
Had ventured—*had* the thing I spake of
been
Mere gold—but this was all of that true
steel,
Whereof they forged the brand Excalibur,
And lightnings play’d about it in the
storm,
And all the little fowl were flurried at it,
And there were cries and clashings in the
nest,
That sent him from his senses : let me go.’

Then Bellicent bemoan’d herself and
said,
‘ Hast thou no pity upon my loneliness ?
Lo, where thy father Lot beside the hearth
Lies like a log, and all but smoulder’d out !
For ever since when traitor to the King
He fought against him in the Barons’ war,
And Arthur gave him back his territory,
His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies
there
A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburiable,
No more ; nor sees, nor hears, nor speaks,
nor knows.
And both thy brethren are in Arthur’s hall,
Albeit neither loved with that full love
I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love :
Stay therefore thou ; red berries charm
the bird,
And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, the
wars,
Who never knewest finger-ache, nor pang
Of wrench’d or broken limb—an often
chance
In those brain-stunning shocks, and
tourney-falls,
Frights to my heart ; but stay : follow
the deer
By these tall firs and our fast-falling burns ;

So make thy manhood mightier day by
 day ;
 Sweet is the chase : and I will seek thee
 out
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to grace
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my prone
 year,
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
 Stay, my best son ! ye are yet more boy
 than man.'

Then Gareth, 'An ye hold me yet for
 child,
 I hear yet once more the story of the child.
 For, mother, there was once a King, like
 ours
 The prince his heir, when tall and
 marriageable,
 Ask'd for a bride ; and thereupon the
 King
 set two before him. One was fair,
 strong, arm'd—
 But to be won by force—and many men
 Desired her ; one, good luck, no man
 desired.
 And these were the conditions of the
 King :
 That save he won the first by force, he
 needs
 Must wed that other, whom no man
 desired,
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so
 vile,
 That evermore she long'd to hide herself,
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye—
 Yea—some she cleaved to, but they died
 of her.
 And one—they call'd her Fame ; and
 one,—O Mother,
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you—
 Shame !
 Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.

Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the
 King,
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow
 the King—
 Else, wherefore born ?'

To whom the mother said,
 'Sweet son, for there be many who deem
 him not,
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven
 King—
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him
 King,
 When I was frequent with him in my
 youth,
 And heard him Kingspeak, and doubted
 him
 No more than he, himself ; but felt him
 mine,
 Of closest kin to me : yet—wilt thou leave
 Thine easeful bidding here, and risk thine all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven
 King ?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round his
 birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet son.'

And Gareth answer'd quickly, 'Not
 an hour,
 So that ye yield me—I will walk thro' fire,
 Mother, to gain it—your full leave to go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of ruin'd
 Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm, and
 crush'd
 The Idolaters, and made the people free ?
 Who should be King save him who
 makes us free ?'

So when the Queen, who long had
 sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which he
 grew,

Found her son's will unwaveringly one,
She answer'd craftily, ' Will ye walk thro'
fire ?

Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed the
smoke.

Ay, go then, an ye must : only one proof,
Before thou ask the King to make thee
knight,

Of thine obedience and thy love to me,
Thy mother,—I demand.'

And Gareth cried,

' A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.

Nay—quick ! the proof to prove me to
the quick !'

But slowly spake the mother looking
at him,

' Prince, thou shalt go disguised to
Arthur's hall,

And hire thyself to serve for meats and
drinks

Among the scullions and the kitchen-
knaves,

And those that hand the dish across the
bar.

Nor shalt thou tell thy name to anyone.

And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and
a day.

For so the Queen believed that when
her son

Beheld his only way to glory lead

Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassalage,

Her own true Gareth was too princely-
proud

To pass thereby ; so should he rest with
her,

Closed in her castle from the sound of
arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied,

' The thrall in person may be free in soul,

And I shall see the jousts. Thy son am I,
And since thou art my mother, must obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will ;
For hence will I, disguised, and hire my-
self

To serve with scullions and with kitchen-
knaves ;

Nor tell my name to any—no, not the
King.'

Gareth awhile linger'd. The mother's
eye

Full of the wistful fear that he would go,
And turning toward him wheresoe'er he
turn'd,

Perplext his outward purpose, till an hour,
When waken'd by the wind which with
full voice

Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on to
dawn,

He rose, and out of slumber calling two
That still had tended on him from his
birth,

Before the wakeful mother heard him,
went.

The three were clad like tillers of the
soil.

Southward they set their faces. The birds
made

Melody on branch, and melody in mid air.
The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd into
green,

And the live green had kindled into
flowers,

For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on the
plain

That broaden'd toward the base of Camelot,
lot,

Far off they saw the silver-misty morn

Rolling her smoke about the Royal mount,

That rose between the forest and the field,
 At times the summit of the high city
 flash'd ;
 At times the spires and turrets half-way
 down
 Prick'd thro' the mist ; at times the great
 gate shone
 Only, that open'd on the field below :
 Anon, the whole fair city had disappear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth were
 amazed,

One crying, ' Let us go no farther, lord.
 Here is a city of Enchanters, built
 By fairy Kings.' The second echo'd him,
 ' Lord, we have heard from our wise man
 at home

To Northward, that this King is not the
 King,

But only changeling out of Fairyland,
 Who drave the heathen hence by sorcery
 And Merlin's glamour.' Then the first
 again,

' Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
 But all a vision.'

Gareth answer'd them
 With laughter, swearing he had glamour
 enow

In his own blood, his princedom, youth
 and hopes,

To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea ;
 So push'd them all unwilling toward the
 gate.

And there was no gate like it under
 heaven.

For barefoot on the keystone, which was
 lined

And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
 The Lady of the Lake stood : all her
 dress

Wet from her sides as water flowing
 away ;

But like the cross-rod great and gaily
 arms

Stretch'd under all the mantle and
 upheld :

And drops of water fell from either hand ;
 And down from one a sword was hung,
 from one

A censer, either worn with wind and
 storm ;

And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish ;
 And in the space to left of her, and right,
 Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
 New things and old co-twisted, as if Time
 Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
 Were giddy gazing there ; and over all
 High on the top were those three Queens,
 the friends

Of Arthur, who should help him at his
 need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a
 space

Stared at the figures, that as had it seemed
 The dragon-boughts and elvish emblem-
 ings

Began to move, seethe, twine and curl :
 they call'd

To Gareth, ' Lord, the gateway is alive.'

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his
 eyes

So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd to
 move.

Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
 Back from the gate started the three, to
 whom

From out thereunder came an ancient
 man,

Long limbed, saying, ' What be ye, my
 sons ?'

Then Gareth, ' We be tillers of the soil,
 Who leaving share in furrow come to see

The glories of our King : but these, my
men,
(Your city moved so weirdly in the mist)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or come
From fairyland ; and whether this be built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and
Queens ;
Or whether there be any city at all,
Or all a vision : and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou these
the truth.'

Then that old Seer made answer playing
on him
And saying, 'Son, I have seen the good
ship sail
Keel upward and mast downward in the
heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :
And here is truth ; but an it please thee
not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told it
me.
For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city, son ;
They came from out a sacred mountain-
cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in
hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems
Saying the King ; tho' some there be that
hold
The King a shadow, and the city real :
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou
pass
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou
become
A thrall to his enchantments, for the King
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the
which

No man can keep ; but, so thou dread to
swear,
Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
Without, among the cattle of the field.
For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city is
built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.'

Gareth spake
Anger'd, 'Old Master, reverence thine
own beard
That looks as white as utter truth, and
seems
Wellnigh as long as thou art statured tall !
Why mockest thou the stranger that hath
been
To thee fair-spoken ?'

But the Seer replied,
'Know ye not then the Riddling of the
Bards ?
'Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion' ?
I mock thee not but as thou mockest me,
And all that see thee, for thou art not who
Thou seemest, but I know thee who thou
art.
And now thou goest up to mock the King,
Who cannot brook the shadow of any lie.'

Unmockingly the mocker ending here
Turn'd to the right, and past along the
plain ;
Whom Gareth looking after said, 'My
men,
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
Here on the threshold of our enterprise.
Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor I :
Well, we will make amends.'

With all good cheer

He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd with
his twain

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and the work
Of ancient kings who did their days in
stone ;

Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at
Arthur's court,

Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and every-
where

At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessening
peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire to
heaven.

And ever and anon a knight would pass
Outward, or inward to the hall : his arms
Clash'd ; and the sound was good to
Gareth's ear.

And out of bower and casement shyly
glanced

Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of
love ;

And all about a healthful people stept
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending heard
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and beheld
Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
The splendour of the presence of the King
Throned, and delivering doom — and
look'd no more—

But felt his young heart hammering in his
ears,

And thought, ' For this half-shadow of a
lie

The truthful King will doom me when I
speak.'

Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find
Sir Gawain or Sir Medred, saw not one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights, that ranged about
the throne,

Clear honour shining like the dewy star

Of dawn, and faith in their great King,
with pure

Affection, and the light of victory,
And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the King,
' A boon, Sir King ! Thy father, Uther,
reft

From my dead lord a field with violence :
For howso'er at first he proffer'd gold,
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our eyes,
We yielded not ; and then he reft us of it
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor field.'

Said Arthur, ' Whether would ye ?
gold or field ?'

To whom the woman weeping, ' Nay, my
lord,

The field was pleasant in my husband's
eye.'

And Arthur, ' Have thy pleasant field
again,

And thrice the gold for Uther's use
thereof,

According to the years. No boon is here,
But justice, so thy say be proven true.

Accursed, who from the wrongs his father
did

Would shape himself a right !'

And while she past,

Came yet another widow crying to him,
' A boon, Sir King ! Thine enemy, King,
am I.

With thine own hand thou slewest my
dear lord,

A knight of Uther in the Barons' war,
When Lot and many another rose and
fought

Against thee, saying thou wert basely
born.

I held with these, and loathe to ask thee
aught.

Yet lo! my husband's brother had my
son
Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved
him dead ;
And standeth seized of that inheritance
Which thou that slewest the sire hast left
the son.
So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle
for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for my
son.'

Then strode a good knight forward,
crying to him,
' A boon, Sir King ! I am her kinsman, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay the
man.'

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal, and
cried,
A boon, Sir King ! ev'n that thou grant
her none,
This railer, that hath mock'd thee in full
hall—
None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve
and gag.'

But Arthur, ' We sit King, to help the
wrong'd
Thro' all our realm. The woman loves
her lord.
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves and
hates !
The kings of old had doom'd thee to the
flames,
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged thee
dead,
And Uther slit thy tongue : but get thee
hence—
Lo ! that rough humour of the kings of
old
Return upon me ! Thou that art her kin,

Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him
not,
But bring him here, that I may judge the
right,
According to the justice of the King :
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless King
Who lived and died for men, the man
shall die.'

Then came in hall the messenger of
Mark,
A name of evil savour in the land,
The Cornish king. In either hand he
bore
What dazzled all, and shone far-off as
shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers, a cloth of palest
gold,
Which down he laid before the throne,
and knelt,
Delivering, that his lord, the vassal king,
Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot ;
For having heard that Arthur of his grace
Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,
knight,
And, for himself was of the greater state,
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
Would yield him this large honour all the
more ;
So pray'd him well to accept this cloth of
gold,
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth, to
rend
In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. ' The
goodly knight !
What ! shall the shield of Mark stand
among these ?'
For, midway down the side of that long
hall

A stately pile,—whereof along the front,
Some blazon'd, some but carven, and
some blank,

There ran a treble range of stony shields,—
Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the
hearth.

And under every shield a knight was
named :

For this was Arthur's custom in his hall ;
When some good knight had done one
noble deed,

His arms were carven only ; but if twain
His arms were blazon'd also ; but if none
The shield was blank and bare without a
sign

Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth
saw

The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich and
bright,

And Modred's blank as death ; and Arthur
cried

To rend the cloth and cast it on the
hearth.

' More like are we to leave him of his
crown

Than make him knight because men call
him king.

The kings we found, ye know we stay'd
their hands

From war among themselves, but left
them kings ;

Of whom were any bounteous, merciful,
Truth-speaking, brave, good livers, them
we enroll'd

Among us, and they sit within our hall.

But Mark hath tarnish'd the great name
of king,

As Mark would sully the low state of churl :
And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of gold,
Return, and meet, and hold him from our
eyes,

Lest we should lap him up in cloth of lead,

Silenced for ever — craven — a man of
plots,

Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-
bushings—

No fault of thine : let Kay the seneschal
Look to thy wants, and send thee satis-
fied—

Accursed, who strikes nor lets the hand
be seen !'

And many another suppliant crying
came

With noise of ravage wrought by beast
and man,

And evermore a knight would ride away.

Last, Gareth leaning both hands heavily
Down on the shoulders of the twain, his
men,

Approach'd between them toward the
King, and ask'd,

' A boon, Sir King (his voice was all
ashamed),

For see ye not how weak and hungerworn
I seem—leaning on these ? grant me to
serve

For meat and drink among thy kitchen-
knaves

A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek my
name.

Hereafter I will fight.'

To him the King,

' A goodly youth and worth a goodlier
boon !

But so thou wilt no goodlier, then must Kay,
The master of the meats and drinks, be
thine.'

He rose and past ; then Kay, a man of
mien

Wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself
Root-bitten by white lichen,

‘Lo ye now !

This fellow hath broken from some Abbey,
 where,
 God wot, he had not beef and brewis enow,
 However that might chance ! but an he
 work,
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
 And sleeker shall he shine than any hog.’

Then Lancelot standing near, ‘Sir
 Seneschal,
 Sleuth-hound thou knowest and gray,
 and all the hounds ;
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost
 not know :
 Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and fine,
 High nose, a nostril large and fine, and
 hands
 Large, fair and fine !—Some young lad’s
 mystery—
 But, or from sheepcot or king’s hall, the
 boy
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all
 grace,
 Lest he should come to shame thy judging
 of him.’

Then Kay, ‘What murmurest thou of
 mystery ?
 Think ye this fellow will poison the
 King’s dish ?
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like : mystery !
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had ask’d
 For horse and armour : fair and fine,
 forsooth !
 Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands ? but see thou
 to it
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot, some
 fine day
 Undo thee not—and leave my man to me.’

So Gareth all for glory underwent
 The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassalage ;

Ate with young lads his portion by the
 door
 And couch’d at night with grimy kitchen-
 knives.
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleasantly,
 But Kay the seneschal who loved him not
 Would hustle and harry him, and labour
 him
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and set
 To turn the broach, draw water, or hew
 wood,
 Or grosser tasks ; and Gareth bow’d
 himself
 With all obedience to the King, and
 wrought
 All kind of service with a noble ease
 That graced the lowliest act in doing it.
 And when the thralls had talk among
 themselves,
 And one would praise the love that linkt
 the King
 And Lancelot—how the King had saved
 his life
 In battle twice, and Lancelot once the
 King’s—
 For Lancelot was the first in Tournament,
 But Arthur mightiest on the battle-field—
 Gareth was glad. Or if some other told,
 How once the wandering forester at dawn,
 Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
 On Caer-Eryri’s highest found the King,
 A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake,
 ‘He passes to the Isle Avilion,
 He passes and is heal’d and cannot die’—
 Gareth was glad. But if their talk were
 foul,
 Then would he whistle rapid as any lark,
 Or carol some old roundelay, and so loud
 That first they mock’d, but, after, rever-
 enced him.
 Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
 Of knights, who sliced a red life-bubbling
 way

Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon, held
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good mates
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,
 would come

Blustering upon them, like a sudden wind
 Among dead leaves, and drive them all
 apart.

Or when the thralls had sport among
 themselves,

So there were any trial of mastery,
 He, by two yards in casting bar or stone
 Was counted best; and if there chanced
 a joust,

So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
 Would hurry thither, and when he saw the
 knights

Clash like the coming and retiring wave,
 And the spear spring, and good horse
 reel, the boy

Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among the
 thralls;

But in the weeks that follow'd, the good
 Queen,

Repentant of the word she made him
 swear,

And saddening in her childless castle,
 sent,

Between the increscent and decrescent
 moon,

Arms for her son, and loosed him from
 his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire of
 her

With whom he used to play at tourney
 once,

When both were children, and in lonely
 haunts

Would scratch a ragged oval on the sand,
 And each at either dash from either end—

Shame never made girl redder than Gareth
 joy.

He laugh'd; he sprang. 'Out of the
 smoke, at once

I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's face—
 These news be mine, none other's—nay,
 the King's—

Descend into the city: ' whereon he sought
 The King alone, and found, and told him
 all.

'I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain in
 a tilt

For pastime; yea, he said it: joust can I.
 Make me thy knight—in secret! let my
 name

Be hid'n, and give me the first quest, I
 spring

Like flame from ashes.'

Here the King's calm eye
 Fell on, and check'd, and made him flush,
 and bow

Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd
 him,

'Son, the good mother let me know thee
 here,

And sent her wish that I would yield thee
 thine.

Make thee my knight? my knights are
 sworn to vows.

Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
 And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
 And uttermost obedience to the King.'

Then Gareth, lightly springing from
 his knees,

'My King, for hardihood I can promise
 thee.

For uttermost obedience make demand
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
 No mallow master of the means and
 tricks!

And as for love, God wot, I love not yet,
But love I shall, God willing.'

And the King—
'Make thee my knight in secret? yea, but
he,
Our noblest brother, and our truest man,
And one with me in all, he needs must
know.'

'Let Lancelot know, my King, let
Lancelot know,
Thy noblest and thy truest!'

And the King—
'But wherefore would ye men should
wonder at you?
Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
And the deed's sake my knighthood do
the deed,
Than to be noised of.'

Merrily Gareth ask'd,
'Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of
it?
Let be my name until I make my name!
My deeds will speak: it is but for a day.'
So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
Smiled the great King, and half-unwill-
ingly
Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.
Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,
'I have given him the first quest: he is
not proven.
Look therefore when he calls for this in
hall,
Thou get to horse and follow him far away.
Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor
slain.'

Then that same day there past into the
hall

A damsel of high lineage, and a-brow
May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-
blossom,
Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender
nose
Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;
She into hall past with her page and
cried,

'O King, for thou hast driven the foe
without,
See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset
By bandits, everyone that owns a tower
The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye
there?
Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were
king,
Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as free
From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-
cloth
From that blest blood it is a sin to spill.'

'Comfort thyself,' said Arthur, 'I nor
mine
Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows
they swore,
The wastest moorland of our realm shall
be
Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
What is thy name? thy need?'

'My name?' she said—
'Lynette my name; noble; my need, a
knight
To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
And comely, yea, and comelier than
myself.
She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
Runs in three loops about her living-
place;
And o'er it are three passings, and three
knights

Defend the passings, brethren, and a
fourth

And of that four the mightiest, holds her
stay'd

In her own castle, and so besieges her
To break her will, and make her wed with
him :

And but delays his purpose till thou send
To do the battle with him, thy chief man
Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to overthrow,
Then wed, with glory : but she will not
wed

Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.'

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth ask'd,
'Damsel, ye know this Order lives to
crush

All wrongers of the Realm. But say, these
four,

Who be they? What the fashion of the
men?'

'They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,
The fashion of that old knight-errantry
Who ride abroad and do but what they
will ;

Courteous or bestial from the moment,
such

As have nor law nor king ; and three of
these

Proud in their fantasy call themselves the
Day,

Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Even-
ing-Star,

Being strong fools ; and never a whit more
wise

The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in
black,

A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.
He names himself the Night and oftener

Death,
And wears a helmet mounted with a skull,

And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,
To show that who may slay or scape the
three

Slain by himself shall enter endless night.
And all these four be fools, but mighty men,
And therefore am I come for Lancelot.'

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where he
rose,

A head with kindling eyes above the
throng,

'A boon, Sir King—this quest !' then—
for he mark'd

Kay near him groaning like a wounded
bull—

'Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-
knave am I,

And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
am I,

And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King,' and Arthur glancing

at him,
Brought down a momentary brow.

'Rough, sudden,
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—
Go therefore,' and all hearers were amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,
pride, wrath

Slew the May-white : she lifted either arm,
'Fie on thee, King ! I ask'd for thy chief
knight,

And thou hast given me but a kitchen-
knave.'

Then ere a man in hall could stay her,
turn'd,

Fled down the lane of access to the King,
Took horse, descended the slope street

and past

The weird white gate, and paused without
beside

The field of tourney, murmuring 'kitchen-
knave.'

Now two great entries open'd from the
 hall,
 At one end one, that gave upon a range
 Of level pavement where the King would
 pace
 At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood ;
 And down from this a lordly stairway
 sloped
 Till lost in blowing trees and tops of
 towers ;
 And out by this main doorway past the
 King.
 But one was counter to the hearth, and
 rose
 High that the highest-crested helm could
 ride
 Therethro' nor graze : and by this entry
 led
 The damsel in her wrath, and on to this
 Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the
 door
 King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a
 town,
 A warhorse of the best, and near it stood
 The two that out of north had follow'd
 him :
 This bare a maiden shield, a casque ; that
 held
 The horse, the spear ; whereat Sir Gareth
 loosed
 A look that dropt from collar-bone to heel,
 A cloth of roughest web, and cast it down,
 And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,
 That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and
 flash'd as those
 Dull-coated things, that making slide
 apart
 Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath there
 burns
 A jewell'd harness, ere they pass and fly.
 So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in arms.
 Then as he donn'd the helm, and took the
 shield

And mounted horse and graspt a spear, of
 grain
 Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site, and
 tipt
 With trenchant steel, around him slowly
 prest
 The people, while from out of kitchen came
 The thralls in throng, and seeing who had
 work'd
 Lustier than any, and whom they could
 but love,
 Mounted in arms, threw up their caps and
 cried,
 ' God bless the King, and all his fellow-
 ship !'
 And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth rode
 Down the slope street, and past without
 the gate.

So Gareth past with joy ; but as the cur
 Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere his
 cause
 Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being
 named,
 His owner, but remembers all, and growls
 Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the door
 Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he used
 To harry and hustle.

' Bound upon a quest
 With horse and arms—the King hath past
 his time—
 My scullion knave ! Thralls to your work
 again,
 For an your fire be low ye kindle mine !
 Will there be dawn in West and eve in
 East ?
 Begone !—my knave !—belike and like
 enow
 Some old head-blow not heeded in his
 youth
 So shook his wits they wander in his
 prime—

Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice,
Nor shamed to haul himself a kitchen-
knave.

Tut: he was tame and meek enow with me,
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's noticing.
Well—I will after my bonn' knave, and learn
Whether he know me for his master yet.
Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the
sire—

Thence, if the King awoken from his dream,
Into the smoke again.'

But Lancelot said,

'Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against the
King,

For that did never he whereon ye rail,
But ever meekly served the King in thee?
Alas! take counsel: for this lad is great
And lusty, and knowing both of lance and
sword.'

'Tut, tell not me,' said Kay, 'ye are
overtime

To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies.'

Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode
I down the slope city, and out beyond the
gate.

But by the field of journey lingering yet,
Mutter'd the damsel, 'Wherefore did the
King

Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt,
at least

He might have yielded to me one of those
Who till for lady's love and glory here,
Rather than—O sweet heaven! O fit
upon him—

His kitchen-knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth drew
(And there were none but few goodlier
than he)

Shining in arms, 'Damsel, the quest is
mine.

I seek, and I follow.' She thereat, as one
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the holt,
And deems it carrion of some woodland
thing,

Or shrew, or wensel, nipt her slender nose,
With petulant thumb and finger, shrilling,
'Hence!

Avoid, thou smellst all of kitchen-grease.
And look who comes behind,' for there
was Kay.

'Knowest thou not me? thy master? I
am Kay.

We lack thee by the hearth.'

And Gareth to him,

'Master no more! too well I know thee,
ay—

The most ungentle knight in Arthur's hall.'

'Have at thee then,' said Kay; they
shock'd, and Kay

Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,
'Lead, and I follow,' and fast away she
 fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
Behind her, and the heart of her good horse
Was nigh to burst with violence of the
beat,

Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

'What doest thou, scullion, in my fellow-
ship?

Doen'st thou that I accept thee aught the
more

Or love thee better, that by some device
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
Thou hast overthrow'n and slain thy master
—thou!—

Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!—
to me

Thou smellst all of kitchen as before.'

'Damsel,' Sir Gareth answer'd gently,
 'say
 Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,
 I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
 Or die therefore.'

'Ay, wilt thou finish it?
 Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he
 talks!
 The listening rogue hath caught the man-
 ner of it.
 But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with,
 knave,
 And then by such a one that thou for all
 The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
 Shalt not once dare to look him in the face.'

'I shall assay,' said Gareth with a smile
 That madden'd her, and away she flash'd
 again
 Down the long avenues of a boundless
 wood,
 And Gareth following was again beknaved.

'Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the
 only way
 Where Arthur's men are set along the
 wood;
 The wood is nigh as full of thieves as
 leaves:
 If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet,
 Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of
 thine?
 Fight, an thou canst: I have miss'd the
 only way.'

So till the dusk that follow'd evensong
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;
 Then after one long slope was mounted,
 saw,
 Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand
 pines
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink

To westward—in the deeps whereof a
 mere,
 Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,
 Under the half-dead sunset glared; and
 shouts
 Ascended, and there brake a servingman
 Flying from out of the black wood, and
 crying,
 'They have bound my lord to cast him in
 the mere.'
 Then Gareth, 'Bound am I to right the
 wrong'd,
 But straitlier bound am I to bide with
 thee.'
 And when the damsel spake contempt-
 uously,
 'Lead, and I follow,' Gareth cried again,
 'Follow, I lead!' so down among the
 pines
 He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd
 nigh the mere,
 And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed,
 Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,
 A stone about his neck to drown him in it.
 Three with good blows he quieted, but
 three
 Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed
 the stone
 From off his neck, then in the mere beside
 Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.
 Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free
 feet
 Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

'Well that ye came, or else these caitiff
 rogues
 Had wreak'd themselves on me; good
 cause is theirs
 To hate me, for my wont hath ever been
 To catch my thief, and then like vermin
 here
 Drown him, and with a stone about his
 neck;

And under this wan water many of them
 Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly light
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have
 saved a life
 Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this
 wood,
 And fain would I reward thee worship-
 fully.
 What guerdon will ye?

Gareth sharply spake,
 'None! for the deed's sake have I done
 the deed,
 In uttermost obedience to the King.
 Wilt thou yield this damsel harbour-
 age?'

Whereat the Baron saying, 'I well
 believe
 You be of Arthur's Table,' a light laugh
 Broke from Lynette, 'Ay, truly of a truth,
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-
 knave:—
 But deem not I accept thee aught the more,
 Scallion, for running sharply with thy spit
 Down on a rout of craven forsters.
 A thresher with his flail had scatter'd them.
 Nay—for thou smellst of the kitchen
 still.
 But an this lord will yield us harbourage,
 Well.'

So she spake. A league beyond the
 wood,
 All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
 His towers where that day a feast had been
 Held in high hall, and many a viand left,
 And many a costly gate, received the three.
 And there they placed a peacock in
 pride
 Before the damsel, and the Baron set
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

'Museum, that late we used for
 courtesy,
 Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my
 side.
 Here now—this morn I stood in Arthur's
 hall,
 And pray'd the King would grant me
 Lancelot
 To fight the brotherhood of Day and
 Night—
 The last a monster unsubstantiable
 Of any save of him for whom I call'd—
 Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-
 knave,
 "The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave
 am I,
 And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
 am I."

Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,
 "Go therefore," and so gives the quest to
 him—
 Him—here—a villain fitter to stick swine
 Than ride abroad redressing women's
 wrong,
 Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.'

Then half-ashamed and part-aman'd,
 the lord
 Now look'd at one and now at other, left
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride,
 And, seating Gareth at another board,
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

'Friend, whether thou be kitchen-
 knave, or not,
 Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,
 And whether she be mad, or else the
 King,
 Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
 Iook not; but thou art of a strong stroke,
 For strong thou art and goodly there-
 withal,
 And sweet of my life; and therefore now

For here be mighty men to joust with,
 weigh
 Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel
 back
 To crave again Sir Lancelot of the King.
 Thy pardon ; I but speak for thine avail.
 The saver of my life.'

And Gareth said,
 'Full pardon, but I follow up the quest.
 Despite of Day and Night and Death and
 Hell.'

So when, next morn, the lord whose
 life he saved
 Had, some brief space, convey'd them on
 their way
 And left them with God-speed, Sir Gareth
 spake,
 'Lead, and I follow.' Haughtily she
 replied,

'I fly no more : I allow thee for an hour.
 Lion and stoat have isled together, knave,
 In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,
 methinks
 Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt
 thou, fool?
 For hard by here is one will overthrow
 And slay thee : then will I to court again,
 And shame the King for only yielding me
 My champion from the ashes of his hearth.'

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd cour-
 teously,
 'Say thou thy say, and I will do my deed.
 Allow me for mine hour, and thou wilt find
 My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay
 Among the ashes and wedded the King's
 son.'

Then to the shore of one of those long
 loops

Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd, they
 came.

Rough-thicketed were the banks and
 steep ; the stream

Full, narrow ; this a bridge of single arc
 Took at a leap ; and on the further side
 Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
 In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in
 hue,

Save that the dome was purple, and above,
 Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
 And therebefore the lawless warrior paced
 Unarm'd, and calling, 'Damsel, is this he,
 The champion thou hast brought from
 Arthur's hall ?

For whom we let thee pass.' 'Nay, nay,'
 she said,

'Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter
 scorn

Of thee and thy much folly hath sent thee
 here

His kitchen-knave : and look thou to
 thyself :

See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
 And slay thee unarm'd : he is not knight
 but knave.'

Then at his call, 'O daughters of the
 Dawn,

And servants of the Morning-Star, ap-
 proach,

Arm me,' from out the silken curtain-folds
 Bare-footed and bare-headed three fair
 girls

In gilt and rosy raiment came : their feet
 In dewy grasses glisten'd ; and the hair
 All over glanced with dewdrop or with
 gem

Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.
 These arm'd him in blue arms, and gave
 a shield

Blue also, and thereon the morning star.
 And Gareth silent gazed upon the knight,

Who stood a moment, ere his horse was
I might,
Glorying ; and in the stream beneath him,
shone
Inmingled with Heaven's azure waver-
ingly.
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,
His arms, the rosy timent, and the star.

Then she that watch'd him, 'Wherefore
stare ye so ?
Thou shakest in thy fear : there yet is time :
Flee down the valley before he get to
lance.
Who will cry shame ? Thou art not
knight but knave.'

Said Gareth, 'Damsel, whether knave
or knight,
I or liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and revile.
Fair words were best for him who fights
for thee ;
But truly foul are better, for they send
That strength of anger thro' mine an-
I know
That I shall overthrow him.'

And he that bore
The star, being mounted, cried from
the bridge,
'Kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn of me !
Such fight had I, but answer scorn with
scorn.
For this were shame to do him further
wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his
horse
And arms, and so return him to the King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly,
knave.
Avoid : for it besemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady.'

'Dog, thou liest,
I spring from better lineage than thine
own.'
He spake ; and all at fiery speed the two
Shook'd on the central bridge, and either
spear
Giant but not broke, and either knight at
once,
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge,
Fell, as if dead ; but quickly rose and
drew,
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his
brand
He drove his enemy backward down the
bridge,
The damsel crying, 'Well-stricken,
kitchen-knave !'
Till Gareth's shield was cloven ; but one
stroke
Laid him that clove it grovelling on the
ground.

Then cried the fall'n, 'Take not my
life : I yield.'
And Gareth, 'So this damsel ask it of me
Good—I accord it easily as a grace.'
She, reddening, 'Insolent scullion : I of
thee ?
I bound to thee for any favour ask'd !'
'Then shall he die.' And Gareth there-
unlaced
His helmet as to slay him, but she shriek'd,
'Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
One nobler than thyself.' 'Damsel, thy
charge
Is an absorbing pleasure to me. Knight,
Thy life is thine at her command. Arise
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and say
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee. See
thou crave
His pardon for thy breaking of his law.
Myself, when I return, will plead for thee.

Thy shield is mine—farewell ; and,
 damsel, thou,
 Lead, and I follow.’

And fast away she fled.
 Then when he came upon her, spake,
 ‘Methought,
 Knave, when I watch’d thee striking on
 the bridge
 The savour of thy kitchen came upon me
 A little faintlier : but the wind hath
 changed :
 I scent it twenty-fold.’ And then she sang,
 ‘“O morning star” (not that tall feign
 there
 Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
 Or some device, hast foully overthrown),
 “O morning star that smilest in the blue,
 O star, my morning dream hath proven
 true,
 Smile sweetly, thou ! my love hath smiled
 on me.”

‘But thou begone, take counsel, and
 away,
 For hard by here is one that guards a
 ford—
 The second brother in their fool’s parable—
 Will pay thee all thy wages, and to boot.
 Care not for shame : thou art not knight
 but knave.’

To whom Sir Gareth answer’d, laugh-
 ingly,
 ‘Parables ? Hear a parable of the knave.
 When I was kitchen-knave among the rest
 fierce was the hearth, and one of my
 co-mates
 Own’d a rough dog, to whom he cast his
 coat,
 “Guard it,” and there was none to meddle
 with it.
 And such a coat art thou, and thee the
 King

Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,
 To worry, and not to flee—and—knight
 or knave—

The knave that doth thee service as full
 knight
 Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
 Toward thy sister’s freeing.’

‘Ay, Sir Knave !
 Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a
 knight,
 Being but knave, I hate thee all the more.’

‘Fair damsel, you should worship me
 the more,
 That, being but knave, I throw thine
 enemies.’

‘Ay, ay,’ she said, ‘but thou shalt meet
 thy match.’

So when they touch’d the second river-
 loop,
 Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail
 Burnish’d to blinding, shone the Noonday
 Sun
 Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,
 That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
 Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash’d the
 fierce shield,
 All sun ; and Gareth’s eyes had flying
 blots
 Before them when he turn’d from watch-
 ing him.
 He from beyond the roaring shallow
 roar’d,
 ‘What doest thou, brother, in my marches
 here?’
 And she athwart the shallow shrill’d
 again,
 ‘Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur’s
 hall
 Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath
 his arms.’

‘Ugh!’ cried the Sun, and vaulting up a
red
And either face of mangled foolishness,
Push’d horse across the foamings of the
ford,
Whom Gareth met midstream: no room
was there
For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes
they struck
With sword, and these were mighty; the
new knight
Had four he might be slamed; but as the
Sun
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the
fifth,
The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream,
the stream
Descended, and the Sun was wash’d away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the
ford;
So drew him home; but he that fought
no more,
As being all bone-batter’d on the rock,
Yielded: and Gareth sent him to the
King.

‘Myself when I return will plead for thee.’
‘Lead, and I follow.’ Quietly she led.
‘Hath not the good wind, dumber, changed
again?’

‘Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor
here.
There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;
His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I
saw it.

“O Sun” (not this wrong fool whom
thou, Sir Knave,
Hast overthrown thro’ mere unhappiness),
“O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,
O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled
on me.”

‘What knowest thou of loving or of
love?
Nay, nay, God wot, so that wert nobly
born,
Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea,
perchance,—

“O dewy flowers that open to the sun,
O dewy flowers that close when day is
done,
Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled
on me.”

‘What knowest thou of flowers, except,
belike,
To garnish meats with? hath not our
good King
Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-
dom,
A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye
round
The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar’s
head?
Flowers? nay, the boar hath rosemaries
and bay.

“O birds, that warble to the morning
sky,
O birds that warble as the day goes by,
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled
on me.”

‘What knowest thou of birds, lark,
mavis, merle,
Linnet? what dream ye when they utter
forth
May-music growing with the growing
light,
Their own newsworthip? thou be for the
snare
(So rest thy folly) thou be for the spit,
Larding and basting. See thou have not
now

Larded thy last, except thou turn and fly.
There stands the third fool of their
allegory.'

For there beyond a bridge of treble
bow,
All in a rose-red from the west, and all
Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the broad
Deep-dimpled current underneath, the
knight,
That named himself the Star of Evening,
stood.

And Gareth, 'Wherefore waits the
madman there
Naked in open dayshine?' 'Nay,' she
cried,
'Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd skins
That fit him like his own; and so ye cleave
His armour off him, these will turn the
blade.'

Then the third brother shouted o'er the
bridge,
'O brother-star, why shine ye here so low?
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye slain
The damsel's champion?' and the damsel
cried,

'No star of thine, but shot from Arthur's
heaven
With all disaster unto thine and thee!
For both thy younger brethren have gone
down
Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir
Star;
Art thou not old?'

'Old, damsel, old and hard,
Old, with the might and breath of twenty
boys.'
Said Gareth, 'Old, and over-bold in
brag!

But that same strength which threw the
Morning Star
Can throw the Evening.'

Then that other blew
A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
'Approach and arm me!' With slow
steps from out
An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stain'd
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
And arm'd him in old arms, and brought
a helm
With but a drying evergreen for crest,
And gave a shield whereon the Star of
Even
Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-
blem, shone.
But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-bow,
They madly hurl'd together on the bridge;
And Gareth overthrew him, lighted, drew,
There met him drawn, and overthrew him
again,
But up like fire he started: and as oft
As Gareth brought him grovelling on his
knees,
So many a time he vaulted up again;
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great
heart,
Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,
Labour'd within him, for he seem'd as one
That all in later, sadder age begins
To war against ill uses of a life,
But these from all his life arise, and cry,
'Thou hast made us lords, and canst not
put us down!'
He half-despairs; so Gareth seem'd to
strike
Vainly, the damsel clamouring all the
while,
'Well done, knave-knight, well stricken,
O good knight-knave—
O knave, as noble as any of all the
knights—

Shame me not, shame me not. I have
 prophesied—

Strike, thou art worthy of the Table
 Round—

His arms are odd, he trusts the harden'd
 skin—

Strike—strike—the wind will never
 change again.

And Gareth hearing ever stronglier smote,
 And hew'd great pieces of his armour off
 him,

But lash'd in vain against the harden'd skin,
 And could not wholly bring him under,
 more

Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge
 on ridge,

The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and
 springs

For ever; till at length Sir Gareth's brand
 Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the
 hilt.

'I have thee now;' but forth that other
 sprang,

And, all unknighthlike, writhed his wiry
 arms

Around him, till he felt, despite his mail,
 Strangled, but straining ev'n his uttermost
 Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er the
 bridge

Down to the river, sink or swim, and
 cried,

'Lead, and I follow.'

But the damsel said,

'I lead no longer; ride thou at my side;
 Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-
 knives.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy
 plain,
 O rainbow with three colours after rain,
 Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath smiled
 on me."

'Sir,—and, good faith, I din had
 added— Knight,

But that I heard thee call thyself a
 knave,—

Shamed am I that I so recklessly, reckled,
 Missaid thee; noble I am; and thought
 the King

Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy
 pardon, friend,

For thou hast ever answer'd courteously,
 And wholly bold thou art, and meek
 withal

As any of Arthur's best, but, being knave,
 Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what thou
 art.'

'Damsel,' he said, 'you be not all to
 blame,

Saving that you mistrusted our good King
 Would handle scorn, or yield you, asking,
 one

Not fit to cope your quest. You said
 your say;

Mine answer was my deed. Good sooth!
 I hold

He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,
 nor meet

To fight for gentle damsel, he, who lets
 His heart be stirr'd with any foolish heat
 At any gentle damsel's waywardness.

Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings
 fought for me:

And seeing now thy words are fair,
 methinks

There rides no knight, not Lancelot, his
 great self,

Hath force to quell me.'

Nigh upon that hour
 When the lone hern forgets his melan-
 choly,
 Lets down his other leg, and stretching,
 dreams

Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
 Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling at
 him,
 And told him of a cavern hard at hand,
 Where bread and baken meats and good
 red wine
 Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors
 Had sent her coming champion, waited
 him.

Anon they past a narrow comb wherein
 Were slabs of rock with figures, knights
 on horse
 Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-waning
 hues.
 'Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once
 was here,
 Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on the
 rock
 The war of Time against the soul of
 man.
 And yon four fools have suck'd their alle-
 gory
 From these damp walls, and taken but
 the form.
 Know ye not these?' and Gareth lookt
 and read—
 In letters like to those the vexillary
 Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming
 Gelt—
 'PHOSPHORUS,' then 'MERIDIES'—
 'HESPERUS'—
 'NOX'—'MORS,' beneath five figures,
 armed men,
 Slab after slab, their faces forward all,
 And running down the Soul, a Shape that
 fled
 With broken wings, torn raiment and loose
 hair,
 For help and shelter to the hermit's
 cave.
 'Follow the faces, and we find it. Look,
 Who comes behind?'

For one—delay'd at first
 Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
 To Camelot, then by what thereafter
 chanced,
 The damsel's headlong error thro' the
 wood—
 Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-
 loops—
 His blue shield-lions cover'd—softly drew
 Behind the twain, and when he saw the
 star
 Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,
 cried,
 'Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for my
 friend.'
 And Gareth crying prick'd against the cry;
 But when they closed—in a moment—at
 one touch
 Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of the
 world—
 Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
 That when he found the grass within his
 hands
 He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon
 Lynette:
 Harshly she ask'd him, 'Shamed and
 overthrown,
 And tumbled back into the kitchen-knave,
 Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast
 in vain?'
 'Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son
 Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-
 cent,
 And victor of the bridges and the ford,
 And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown by
 whom
 I know not, all thro' mere unhappiness—
 Device and sorceery and unhappiness—
 Out, sword; we are thrown!' And
 Lancelot answer'd, 'Prince,
 O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness
 Of one who came to help thee, not to
 harm,

Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee
whole,

As on the day when Arthur laughed him.'

Then Gareth, 'Thou—Lancelot!—
thine the hand

That threw me? An some chance to mar
the boast

Thy brethren of thee make—which could
not chance—

Had sent thee down before a lesser spear,
Shamed had I been, and sad—O Lancelot
—thou!

Whereat the maiden, petulant, 'Lance-
lot,

Why came ye not, when call'd? and
wherefore now

Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my
knave,

Who being still rebuked, would answer
still

Courteous as any knight—but now, if
knight,

The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd
and trick'd,

And only wondering wherefore play'd
upon:

And doubtful whether I and mine be
scorn'd.

Where should be truth if not in Arthur's
hall,

In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave,
prince and fool,

I hate thee and for ever.'

And Lancelot said,

'Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight
art thou

To the King's best wish. O damsel, be
you wise

To call him shamed, who is but over-
thrown?

Thrown have I been, nor once, but many
a time.

Victor from vanquish'd issues at the last,
And overthrower from being overthrown.
With sword we have not striven; and thy
good horse

And thou art weary; yet not less I felt
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance of
thine.

Well hast thou done; for all the stream
is freed,

And thou hast wreak'd his justice on his
foes,

And when reviled, hast answer'd graci-
ously,

And makest merry when overthrown.
Prince, Knight,

Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our
Table Round!'

And then when turning to Lynette he
told

The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said,
'Ay well—ay well—for worse than being
fool'd

Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats and
drinks

And forage for the horse, and flint for fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.

Seek, till we find! And when they
sought and found,

Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden
gazed.

'Sound sleep be thine! sound cause to
sleep hast thou.

Wake lassy! Seem I not as tender to him
As any mother? Ay, but such a one
As all day long hath rated at her child,
And vext his day, but blesses him asleep—
Good lord, how sweetly smells the honey-
suckle

In the hush'd night, as if the world were
one

Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness !

O Lancelot, Lancelot'—and she clapt her
hands—

' Full merry am I to find my goodly knave
is knight and noble. See now, sworn
have I,

Else yon black felon had not let me pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle with
him.

Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee first ;
Who doubts thee victor ? so will my
knight-knave

Miss the full flower of this accomplish-
ment.'

Said Lancelot, 'Peradventure he, you
name,

May know my shield. Let Gareth, an
he will,

Change his for mine, and take my charger,
fresh,

Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as well
As he that rides him.' 'Lancelot-like,'
she said,

'Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as in
all.'

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely clutch'd
the shield ;

'Ramp ye lance-splintering lions, on
whom all spears

Are rotten sticks ! ye seem agape to roar !
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your
lord !—

Carenot, good beasts, so well I care for you.
O noble Lancelot, from my hold on these
Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that will
not shame

Even the shadow of Lancelot under
shield,

Hence : let us go.'

Silent the silent field

They traversed. Arthur's harp tho'
summer-wan,

In counter motion to the clouds, allured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his
liege.

A star shot : 'Lo,' said Gareth, 'the foe
falls !'

An owl whoopt : 'Hark the victor peal-
ing there !'

Suddenly she that rode upon his left
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent
him, crying,

'Yield, yield him this again : 'tis he must
fight :

I curse the tongue that all thro' yesterday
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on
Lancelot now

To lend thee horse and shield : wonders
ye have done ;

Miracles ye cannot : here is glory enow
In having flung the three : I see thee
maim'd,

Mangled : I swear thou canst not fling
the fourth.'

'And wherefore, damsel ? tell me all
ye know.

You cannot scare me ; nor rough face, or
voice,

Brute bulk of limb, or boundless savagery
Appal me from the quest.'

'Nay, Prince,' she cried,

'God wot, I never look'd upon the face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by day ;
But watch'd him have I like a phantom
pass

Chilling the night : nor have I heard the
voice.

Always he made his mouthpiece of a page
Who came and went, and still reported
him

As closing in himself the strength of ten,
And when his anger tare him, massacring
Man, woman, lad and girl—yea, the soft
babe!

Some hold that he hath swallow'd infant
flesh,

Monster! O Prince, I went for Lancelot
first,

The quest is Lancelot's: give him back
the shield.'

Said Gareth laughing, 'An he fight for
this,

Belike he wins it as the better man:
Thus—and not else!'

But Lancelot on him urged
All the devisings of their chivalry
When one might meet a mightier than
himself;

How best to manage horse, lance, sword
and shield,

And so fill up the gap where force might
fail

With skill and fineness. Instant were
his words.

Then Gareth, 'Here be rules. I know
but one—

To dash against mine enemy and to win,
Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the joust,
And seen thy way.' 'Heaven help thee,'
sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud that
grew

To thunder-gloom palling all stars, they
rode

In converse till she made her palfrey halt,
Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,
'There.'

And all the three were silent seeing,
pitch'd

Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the
marge,

Black, with black banner, and a long
black horn

Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth
graspt,

And so, before the two could hinder him,
Sent all his heart and breath thro' all the
horn.

Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled; anon
Came lights and lights, and once again
he blew;

Whereon were hollow tramlings up and
down

And muffled voices heard, and shadows
past;

Till high above him, circled with her
maids,

The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
Beautiful among lights, and waving to him
White hands, and courtesy; but when
the Prince

Three times had blown—after long hush
—at last—

The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
Thro' those black foldings, that which
housed therein.

High on a nightblack horse, in nightblack
arms,

With white breast-bone, and barren ribs
of Death,

And crown'd with fleshless laughter—
some ten steps—

In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn—
advanced

The monster, and then paused, and spake
no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,
'Fool, for thou hast, men say, the
strength of ten,

Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God
 hath given,
 But must, to make the terror of thee more,
 Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries
 Of that which Life hath done with, and
 the clod,
 Less dul than thou, will hide with
 mantling flowers
 As if for pity?' But he spake no word ;
 Which set the horror higher : a maiden
 swoon'd ;
 The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and
 wept,
 As doom'd to be the bride of Night and
 Death ;
 Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his
 helm ;
 And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm
 blood felt
 Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were
 aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely
 neigh'd,
 And Death's dark war-horse bounded
 forward with him.
 Then those that did not blink the terror,
 saw
 That Death was cast to ground, and
 slowly rose.
 But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the
 skull.
 Half fell to right and half to left and lay.
 Then with a stronger buffet he clove the
 helm
 As throughly as the skull ; and out from
 this
 Issued the bright face of a blooming boy
 Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,
 ' Knight,
 Slay me not : my three brethren bad me
 do it,
 To make a horror all about the house,

And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.
 They never dream'd the passes would be
 past.'
 Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one
 Not many a moon his younger, ' My fair
 child,
 What madness made thee challenge the
 chief knight
 Of Arthur's hall?' ' Fair Sir, they bad
 me do it.
 They hate the King, and Lancelot, the
 King's friend,
 They hoped to slay him somewhere on
 the stream,
 They never dream'd the passes could be
 past.'

Then sprang the happier day from
 underground ;
 And Lady Lyonors and her house, with
 dance
 And revel and song, made merry over
 Death,
 As being after all their foolish fears
 And horrors only proven a blooming boy.
 So large mirth lived and Gareth won the
 quest.

And he that told the tale in older times
 Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
 But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

GERAINT AND ENID.

I.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's
 court,
 A tributary prince of Devon, one
 Of that great Order of the Table Round,
 Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
 And loved her, as he loved the light of
 Heaven.
 And as the light of Heaven varies, now

At sunrise, now at noon, now by night
With moon and twinkling stars, so loved
Geraint

To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimson and in purple, and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's
eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a
state

Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendour; and the Queen
herself,

Grateful to Prince Geraint for service
done,
Loved her, and often with her own white
hands

Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with true
heart

Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
And seeing them so tender and so close,
Long in their common love rejoiced
Geraint.

But when a rumour rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet was
heard

The world's loud whisper breaking into
storm,
Not less Geraint believed it; and there
fell

A horror on him, lost his gentle wife,
Thro' that great tenderness for Guinevere,
Had suffer'd, or should suffer any taint
In nature: wherefore going to the King,
He made this pretext, that his principedom
lay

Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were many evil, and certain
knights,
Assassins, and all flyers from the hand

Of Justice, and without further a law:
And therefore, till the King himself
should judge

To cleanse this common sewer of all his
realm,

He craved a fair permission to depart,
And there desired the stateliest and the
King,

Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to the
shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own
land;

Where, thinking, that if ever yet was
wife

True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compass'd her with sweet observances
And worship, never leaving her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the King,
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his principedom and its cares.

And this forgetfulness was hateful to her.
And by and by the people, when they met
In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
As of a prince whose manhood was all
gone,

And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
And this she gather'd from the people's
eyes:

This too the women who attired her head,
To please her, dwelling on his boundless
love,

Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the
more:

And day by day she thought to tell Geraint,
But could not out of bashful delicacy;
While he that watch'd her sadden, was
the more

Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last, it chanced that on a summer
 morn
 (They sleeping each by either) the new sun
 Beat thro' the blindless casement of the
 room,
 And heated the strong warrior in his
 dreams ;
 Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
 And bared the knotted column of his
 throat,
 The massive square of his heroic breast,
 And arms on which the standing muscle
 sloped,
 As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
 Running too vehemently to break upon it.
 And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
 Admiring him, and thought within herself,
 Was ever man so grandly made as he ?
 Then, like a shadow, past the people's
 talk
 And accusation of uxoriousness
 Across her mind, and bowing over him,
 Low to her own heart piteously she said :

'O noble breast and all-puissant arms,
 Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
 Reproach you, saying all your force is
 gone ?
 I *am* the cause, because I dare not speak
 And tell him what I think and what they
 say.
 And yet I hate that he should linger here ;
 I cannot love my lord and not his name.
 Far liefer had I gird his harness on him,
 And ride with him to battle and stand by,
 And watch his mightful hand striking
 great blows
 At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
 Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
 Not hearing any more his noble voice,
 Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
 And darken'd from the high light in his
 eyes,

Than that my lord thro' me should suffer
 shame.
 Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
 And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
 Or maybe pierced to death before mine
 eyes,
 And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
 And how men slur him, saying all his force
 Is melted into mere effeminacy ?
 O me, I fear that I am no true wife.'

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
 And the strong passion in her made her
 weep
 True tears upon his broad and naked
 breast,
 And these awoke him, and by great mis-
 chance
 He heard but fragments of her later words,
 And that she fear'd she was not a true
 wife.
 And then he thought, 'In spite of all my
 care,
 For all my pains, poor man, for all my
 pains,
 She is not faithful to me, and I see her
 Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's
 hall.'
 Then tho' he loved and revered her
 too much
 To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
 Right thro' his manful breast darted the
 pang
 That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
 Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
 At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,
 And shook his drowsy squire awake and
 cried,
 'My charger and her palfrey ;' then to her,
 'I will ride forth into the wilderness ;
 For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
 I have not fall'n so low as some would
 wish.

And thou, put on thy worst and meanest
dress.

And ride with me.' And Enid ask'd,
amazed,

'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.'

But he, 'I charge thee, ask not, but obey.'

Then she bethought her of a faded silk,

A faded mantle and a faded veil,

And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,

Wherein she kept them folded reverently

With sprigs of summer laid between the
folds.

She took them, and array'd herself therein,

Remembering when first he came on her

Drest in that dress, and how he loved her
in it,

And all her foolish fears about the dress,

And all his journey to her, as himself

Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.

There on a day, he sitting high in hall,

Before him came a forester of Dean,

Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart

Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,

First seen that day : these things he told
the King.

Then the good King gave order to let blow

His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.

And when the Queen petition'd for his
leave

To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.

So with the morning all the court were
gone.

But Guinevere lay late into the morn,

Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her
love

For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt ;

But rose at last, a single maiden with her,

Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd
the wood ;

There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
Waiting to hear the hounds ; but heard
instead

A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince
Geraint,

Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
Nor weapon, save a golden-bilted brand.

Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow
ford

Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.

A purple scarf, at either end whereof

There swung an apple of the purest gold,

Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up

To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly

In summer suit and silks of holiday.

Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,

Sweetly and stately, and with all grace

Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd
him :

'Late, late, Sir Prince,' she said, 'later
than we !'

'Yea, noble Queen,' he answer'd, 'and
so late

That I but come like you to see the
hunt,

Not join it.' 'Therefore wait with me,'
she said ;

'For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
There is good chance that we shall hear
the hounds :

Here often they break covert at our feet.'

And while they listen'd for the distant
hunt,

And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth,
there rode

Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf ;
Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and the
knight

Had vizor up, and show'd a youthful face,

Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.

And Guinevere, not mindful of his face

In the King's hall, desired his name, and
sent

Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;
Who being vicious, old and irritable,
And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made answer sharply that she should not
know.

'Then will I ask it of himself,' she said.
'Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,' cried
the dwarf ;

Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of
him ;

And when she put her horse toward the
knight,

Struck at her with his whip, and she
return'd

Indignant to the Queen ; whereat Geraint
Exclaiming, 'Surely I will learn the name,'
Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it
of him,

Who answer'd as before ; and when the
Prince

Had put his horse in motion toward the
knight,

Struck at him with his whip, and cut his
cheek.

The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it ; and his quick, instinctive hand
Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :

But he, from his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be wroth at such a worm,
refrain'd

From ev'n a word, and so returning said :

'I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,
Done in your maiden's person to yourself :
And I will track this vermin to their earths :
For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt
To find, at some place I shall come at,
arms

On loan, or else for pledge ; and, being
found,

Then will I fight him, and will break his
pride,

And on the third day will again be here,
So that I be not fall'n in fight. Farewell.'

'Farewell, fair Prince,' answer'd the
stately Queen.

'Be prosperous in this journey, as in all ;
And may you light on all things that you
love,

And live to wed with her whom first you
love :

But ere you wed with any, bring your
bride,

And I, were she the daughter of a king,
Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the
hedge,

Will clothe her for her bridals like the
sun.'

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that
he heard

The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,
A little vext at losing of the hunt,
A little at the vile occasion, rode,
By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy
glade

And valley, with fixt eye following the
three.

At last they issued from the world of
wood,

And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,
And show'd themselves against the sky,
and sank.

And thither came Geraint, and under-
neath

Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side whereof,
White from the mason's hand, a fortress
rose ;

And on one side a castle in decay,
Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry
ravine :

And out of town and valley came a noise
As of a broad brook over a slinging bed
Brawling, or like a clamour of the rooks
At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the
three,
And enter'd, and were lost behind the
walls.

'So,' thought Geraint, 'I have track'd
him to his earth.'

And down the long street riding wearily,
Found every hostel full, and everywhere
Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot
hiss

And bustling whistle of the youth who
scour'd

His master's armour; and of such a one
He ask'd, 'What means the tumult in the
town?'

Who told him, scouring still, 'The
sparrow-hawk!'

Then riding close behind an ancient churl,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,
Ask'd yet once more what meant the
hubbub here?

Who answer'd gladly, 'Ugh! the
sparrow-hawk.'

Then riding further past an armourer's,
Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above
his work,

Was riveting a helmet on his knee,
He put the self-same query, but the man
Nod turning round, nor looking at him,
said:

'Friend, he that labours for the sparrow-
hawk

Has little time for idle questions.'

Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden
spleen:

A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-
hawk!

Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck
him dead!

Ye think the centre-castle of your tower
The murmur of the world! What is it
to me?

O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,
Who peep of nothing but of sparrow-
hawks!

Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-
mad,

Where can I get me harbourage for the
night?

And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy?
Speak!

Whereat the armourer turning all amazed
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
Came forward with the helmet yet in hand
And answer'd, 'Pardon me, O stranger
knight;

We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,
And there is scanty time for half the work.
Arms? truth! I know none: all are
wanted here.

Harbourage? truth, good truth, I know
not, save,

It may be, at Earl Ynol's, over the Bridge
Ynoder.' He spoke and fell to work
again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry
ravine.

There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:
'Whether, fair-seer? to whom Geraint
replied.

'O friend, I seek a harbourage for the
night.'

Then Ynol, 'Into a barefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-
door'd.'

'Thanks, venerable friend,' replied
 Geraint ;
 'So that ye do not serve me sparrow-
 hawks
 For supper, I will enter, I will eat
 With all the passion of a twelve hours'
 fast.'
 Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed
 Earl,
 And answer'd, 'Graver cause than yours
 is mine
 To curse this hedgerow thief, the spar-
 row-hawk :
 But in, go in ; for save yourself desire it,
 We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest.'

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
 His charger trampling many a prickly
 star
 Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.
 He look'd and saw that all was ruinous.
 Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed
 with fern ;
 And here had fall'n a great part of a
 tower,
 Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the
 cliff,
 And like a crag was gay with wilding
 flowers :
 And high above a piece of turret stair,
 Worn by the feet that now were silent,
 wound
 Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
 Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred
 arms,
 And suck'd the joining of the stones, and
 look'd
 A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle
 court,
 The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
 Clear thro' the open casement of the hall,

Singing ; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
 Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
 Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
 That sings so delicately clear, and make
 Conjecture of the plumage and the form ;
 So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint ;
 And made him like a man abroad at morn
 When first the liquid note beloved of men
 Comes flying over many a windy wave
 To Britain, and in April suddenly
 Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green
 and red,
 And he suspends his converse with a
 friend,
 Or it may be the labour of his hands,
 To think or say, 'There is the nightin-
 gale ;'
 So fared it with Geraint, who thought
 and said,
 'Here, by God's grace, is the one voice
 for me.'

It chanced the song that Enid sang was
 one
 Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid
 sang :

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and
 lower the proud ;
 Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm,
 and cloud ;
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
 hate.

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with
 smile or frown ;
 With that wild wheel we go not up or
 down ;
 Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
 great.

'Smile and we smile, the lords of many
 lands ;

Frown and we smile, the lords of our own
hands ;

For man is man and master of his fate.

‘Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring
crowd ;

Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the
cloud ;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.’

‘Hark, by the bird’s song ye may learn
the nest,’

Sail Yniol ; ‘enter quickly.’ Entering
then,

Right o’er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusky-rafter’d many-cobweb’d hall,

He found an ancient dame in dim bro-
cade ;

And near her, like a blossom vermeil-
white,

That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,

Her daughter. In a moment thought
Geraint,

‘Here by God’s rood is the one maid for
me.’

But none spake word except the hoary
Earl :

‘Enid, the good knight’s horse stands in
the court ;

Take him to stall, and give him corn, and
then

Go to the town and buy us flesh and
wine ;

And we will make us merry as we may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.’

He spake : the Prince, as Enid past
him, fain

To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol
caught

His purple scarf, and held, and said,
‘Forbear !

Rest ! the good house, tho’ ruin’d, O
my son,

Endures not that her guest should serve
himself.’

And reverencing the custom of the house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall ;
And after went her way across the bridge,

And reach’d the town, and while the
Prince and Earl

Yet spoke together, came again with one,
A youth, that following with a costrel bore

The means of goodly welcome, flesh and
wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make
them cheer,

And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also

serve

For kitchen, boil’d the flesh, and spread
the board,

And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,

Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,

That crost the trencher as she laid it
down :

But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his

veins,
Let his eye rove in following, or rest

On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky

hall ;
Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

‘Fair Host and Earl, I pray your
courtesy ;

This sparrow-hawk, what is he ? tell me
of him.

His name? but no, good faith, I will
not have it :

For if he be the knight whom late I saw
Ride into that new fortress by your town,
White from the mason's hand, then have
I sworn

From his own lips to have it—I am
Geraint

Of Devon—for this morning when the
Queen

Sent her own maiden to demand the name,
His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen thing,
Struck at her with his whip, and she re-
turn'd

Indignant to the Queen ; and then I swore
That I would track this caitiff to his hold,
And fight and break his pride, and have
it of him.

And all unarm'd I rode, and thought to
find

Arms in your town, where all the men
are mad ;

They take the rustic murmur of their
bourg

For the great wave that echoes round the
world ;

They would not hear me speak : but if
ye know

Where I can light on arms, or if yourself
Should have them, tell me, seeing I have
sworn

That I will break his pride and learn his
name,

Avenging this great insult done the
Queen.'

Then cried Earl Yniol, 'Art thou he
indeed,

Geraint, a name far-sounded among men
For noble deeds? and truly I, when first
I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by your
state

And presence might have guess'd you one
of those

That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.
Nor speak I now from foolish flattery ;
For this dear child hath often heard me
praise

Your feats of arms, and often when I
paused

Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to hear ;
So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
To noble hearts who see but acts of wrong :
O never yet had woman such a pair
Of suitors as this maiden ; first Limours,
A creature wholly given to brawls and wine,
Drunk even when he woo'd ; and be he
dead

I know not, but he past to the wild land.
The second was your foe, the sparrow-
hawk,

My curse, my nephew—I will not let his
name

Slip from my lips if I can help it—he,
When I that knew him fierce and turbu-
lent

Refused her to him, then his pride awoke ;
And since the proud man often is the
mean,

He sow'd a slander in the common ear,
Affirming that his father left him gold,
And in my charge, which was not ren-
der'd to him ;

Bribed with large promises the men who
served

About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat broken
into

Thro' open doors and hospitality ;
Raised my own town against me in the
night

Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my
house ;

From mine own earldom foully ousted
me ;

Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me
yet ;

And keeps me in this ruinous castle here,
Where doubtless he would put me soon
to death,

But that his pride too much despises me :
And I myself sometimes despise myself ;
For I have let men be, and have their
way ;

Am much too gentle, have not used my
power :

Nor know I whether I be very base
Or very manful, whether very wise
Or very foolish ; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,
I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
But can endure it all most patiently.'

' Well said, true heart,' replied Geraint,
' but arms,

That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew,
fight

In next day's tourney I may break his
pride.'

And Yniol answer'd, ' Arms, indeed,
but old

And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
Are mine, and therefore at thine asking,
thine.

But in this tournament can no man tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be there.

Two forks are fixt into the meadow
ground,

And over these is placed a silver wand,
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.

And this, what knight soever be in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew there-
upon,

Who being apt at arms and big of bone

Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And toppling over all antagonism

Has earn'd himself the name of sparrow-
hawk.

But thou, that hast no lady, canst not
fight.'

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright
replied,

Leaning a little toward him, ' Thy leave !
Let *me* lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never saw,
Tho' having seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fall her name will yet remain
Untarnish'd as before ; but if I live,
So aid me Heaven when at mine utter-
most,

As I will make her truly my true wife.'

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
Danced in his bosom, seeing better days.
And looking round he saw not Enid there,
(Who hearing her own name had slipt
away)

But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
And fondling all her hand in his he said,
' Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her understood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward the
Prince.'

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and she

With frequent smile and nod departing
found,

Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl ;
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,
and then

On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
And told her all their converse in the hall,

Proving her heart : but never light and
shade

Coursed one another more on open ground
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and
pale

Across the face of Enid hearing her ;
While slowly falling as a scale that falls,
When weight is added only grain by grain,
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle
breast ;

Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it ;
So moving without answer to her rest
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw
The quiet night into her blood, but lay
Contemplating her own unworthiness ;
And when the pale and bloodless east began
To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
Her mother too, and hand in hand they
moved

Down to the meadow where the jousts
were held,
And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when
Geraint

Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
Himself beyond the rest pushing could
move

The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms
Were on his princely person, but thro'
these

Princelike his bearing shone ; and errant
knights

And ladies came, and by and by the town
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the lists.
And there they fixt the forks into the
ground,

And over these they placed the silver wand,
And over that the golden sparrow-hawk.
Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet
blown,

Spake to the lady with him and pro-
claim'd,

' Advance and take as fairest of the fair,
For I these two years past have won it
for thee,

The prize of beauty.' Loudly spake the
Prince,

' Forbear : there is a worthier,' and the
knight

With some surprise and thrice as much
disdain

Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his
face

Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at
Yule,

So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
' Do battle for it then,' no more ; and thrice
They clash'd together, and thrice they
brake their spears.

Then each, dishorsed and drawing, lash'd
at each

So often and with such blows, that all the
crowd

Wonder'd, and now and then from distant
walls

There came a clapping as of phantom
hands.

So twice they fought, and twice they
breathed, and still

The dew of their great labour, and the
blood

Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd
their force.

But either's force was match'd till Yniol's
cry,

' Remember that great insult done the
Queen,'

Increased Geraint's, who heaved his blade
aloft,

And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit the
bone,

And fell'd him, and set foot upon his
breast,

And said, 'Thy name?' To whom the
taller man

Made answer, groaning, 'Edyrn, son of
Nudd!

Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.

My pride is broken: men have seen my
fall.'

'Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd,' replied
Geraint,

'These two things shalt thou do, or else
thou diest.

First, thou thyself, with damsel and with
dwarf,

Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and coming
there,

Crave pardon for that insult done the
Queen.

And shalt abide her judgment on it; next,
Thou shalt give back their earldom to thy
kin.

These two things shalt thou do, or thou
shalt die.'

And Edyrn answer'd, 'These things will
I do.

For I have never yet been overthrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my
pride

Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!'

And rising up, he rode to Arthur's court,

And there the Queen forgave him easily.

And being young, he changed and came
to loathe

His crime of traitor, slowly drew himself
Bright from his old dark life, and fell at
last

In the great battle fighting for the King.

But when the third day rose the
hunting-morn

Made a low splendour in the world, and
wing,

Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay

With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,

Among the morning shadows of the firs,
Woke and bethought her of her promise
given—

No later than last eve in Prince Geraint—
So bent he seem'd on going the third day,

He would not leave her, till her promise
given—

To ride with him this morning to the
court,

And there be made known to the stately
Queen,

And there be wedded with all ceremony.

At this she cast her eyes upon her dress.

And thought it never yet had look'd so
mean.

For as a leaf in mid-November is

To what it was in mid-October, seem'd

The dress that now she look'd on to the
dress

She look'd on ere the coming of Geraint.

And still she look'd, and still the terror
grew

Of that strange bright and dreadful thing,
A court,

All staring at her in her faded silk:

And softly to her own sweet heart she said:

'This noble prince who won our
earldom back,

So I should see his armour's hoar attire.

Sweet heaven, how much I shall regret
him!

Would he could tarry with us here awhile,

But being so beholden to the Prince,

It were but little grace in any of us

That as he seem'd on going the third day,

To seek a second favour at his hands.

Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,

Myself would wait upon him, and finger
lame,

For liefer than so much discredit him.'

And Enid fell in longing for a dress

All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a
 costly gift
 Of her good mother, given her on the
 night
 Before her birthday, three sad years ago,
 That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd their
 house,
 And scatter'd all they had to all the winds :
 For while the mother show'd it, and the
 two
 Were turning and admiring it, the work
 To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry
 That Edyrn's men were on them, and they
 fled
 With little save the jewels they had on,
 Which being sold and sold had bought
 them bread :
 And Edyrn's men had caught them in their
 flight,
 And placed them in this ruin ; and she
 wish'd
 The Prince had found her in her ancient
 home ;
 Then let her fancy flit across the past,
 And roam the goodly places that she
 knew ;
 And last bethought her how she used to
 watch,
 Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ;
 And one was patch'd and blurr'd and
 lustreless
 Among his burnish'd brethren of the pool ;
 And half asleep she made comparison
 Of that and these to her own faded self
 And the gay court, and fell asleep again ;
 And dreamt herself was such a faded form
 Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool ;
 But this was in the garden of a king ;
 And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she
 knew
 That all was bright ; that all about were
 birds
 Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work ;

That all the turf was rich in plots that
 look'd
 Each like a garnet or a turkis in it ;
 And lords and ladies of the high court
 went
 In silver tissue talking things of state ;
 And children of the King in cloth of
 gold
 Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down
 the walks ;
 And while she thought ' They will not see
 me,' came
 A stately queen whose name was
 Guinevere,
 And all the children in their cloth of gold
 Ran to her, crying, ' If we have fish at all
 Let them be gold ; and charge the
 gardeners now
 To pick the faded creature from the pool,
 And cast it on the mixen that it die.'
 And therewithal one came and seized on
 her,
 And Enid started waking, with her heart
 All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,
 And lo ! it was her mother grasping her
 To get her well awake ; and in her hand
 A suit of bright apparel, which she laid
 Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly :

' See here, my child, how fresh the
 colours look,
 How fast they hold like colours of a shell
 That keeps the wear and polish of the
 wave.
 Why not ? It never yet was worn, I trow :
 Look on it, child, and tell me if ye know
 it.'

And Enid look'd, but all confused at
 first,
 Could scarce divide it from her foolish
 dream :
 Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,

And answer'd, 'Yea, I know it; your
good gift,

So sadly lost on that unhappy night;
Your own good gift!' 'Yea, surely,' said
the dame,

'And gladly given again this happy
morn.

For when the jousts were ended yesterday,
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-
where

He found the sack and plunder of our
house

All scatter'd thro' the houses of the town
And gave command that all which once
was ours

Should now be ours again: and yester-eve,
While ye were talking sweetly with your
Prince,

Came one with this and laid it in my hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favour of us,
Because we have our earldom back again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?

For I myself unwillingly have worn
My faded suit, as you, my child, have
yours,

And howsoever patient, Yniol his.

Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
And page, and maid, and squire, and
seneschal,

And pastime both of hawk and hound, and
all

That appertains to noble maintenance.

Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house;
But since our fortune slippt from sun to
shade,

And all thro' that young traitor, cruel need
Constrain'd us, but a better time has
come;

So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride:

For tho' ye won the price of fairest fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
And should some great court-lady say, the
Prince

Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the
hedge,

And like a madman brought her to the
court,

Then were ye shamed, and, worse, might
shame the Prince

To whom we are beholden; but I know,
When my dear child is set forth at her best,
That neither court nor country, tho' they
sought

Thro' all the provinces like those of old
That lighted on Queen Esther, has her
match.'

Here ceased the kindly mother out of
breath;

And Enid listen'd brightening as she lay;
Then, as the white and glittering star of
morn

Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
And left her maiden couch, and robed
herself,

Help'd by the mother's careful hand and
eye,

Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown;
Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,
and said,

She never yet had seen her half so fair;
And call'd her like that maiden in the tale,
Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of
flowers,

And sweeter than the ride of Cassveluan,
That, for whose love the Roman Cæsar
first

Invaded Britain, 'But we beat him back
As this great Prince invaded us, and we,

Not beat him back, but welcomed him
with joy.

And I can scarcely ride with you to court,
For old am I, and rough the ways and
wild ;

But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall dream
I see my princess as I see her now,
Clothed with my gift, and gay among the
gay.'

But while the women thus rejoiced,
Geraint

Woke where he slept in the high hall, and
call'd

For Enid, and when Yniol made report
Of that good mother making Enid gay
In such apparel as might well beseem
His princess, or indeed the stately Queen,
He answer'd : ' Earl, entreat her by my
love,

Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
That she ride with me in her faded silk.'
Yniol with that hard message went ; it fell
Like flaws in summer laying lusty corn :
For Enid, all abash'd she knew not why,
Dared not to glance at her good mother's
face,

But silently, in all obedience,
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd
gift.

And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to greet her thus
attired ;

And glancing all at once as keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid
fall,

But rested with her sweet face satisfied ;
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
Her by both hands he caught, and sweetly
said,

'O my new mother, be not wroth or
grieved

At thy new son, for my petition to her.
When late I left Caerleon, our great
Queen,

In words whose echo lasts, they were so
sweet,
Made promise, that whatever bride I
brought,

Herself would clothe her like the sun in
Heaven.

Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd hall,
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vow'd that could I gain her, our fair
Queen,

No hand but hers, should make your Enid
burst

Sunlike from cloud— and likewise thought
perhaps,

That service done so graciously would
bind

The two together ; fain I would the two
Should love each other : how can Enid
find

A nobler friend ? Another thought was
mine ;

I came among you here so suddenly,
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I
was loved,

I doubted whether daughter's tenderness,
Or easy nature, might not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal ;
Or whether some false sense in her own
self

Of my contrasting brightness, overbore
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall ;
And such a sense might make her long for
court

And all its perilous glories : and I
thought,

That could I someway prove such force
in her

Link'd with such love for me, that at a
word

(No reason given her) she could cast aside
A splendour dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer; or if not so new,
Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted usage; then I felt

That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and
flows,

Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I do
rest.

A prophet certain of my prophecy,
That never shadow of mistrust can cross
Between us. Grant me pardon for my
thoughts:

And for my strange petition I will make
Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,
When your fair child shall wear your costly
gift

Beside your own warm hearth, with, on
her knees,

Who knows? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to lisp
you thanks.'

He spoke: the mother smiled, but half
in tears,

Then brought a mantle down and wrapt
her in it,

And clapt and kiss'd her, and they rode
away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere had
climb'd

The giant tower, from whose high crest,
they say,

Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea;

But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale of
Usk,

By the flat meadow, till she saw them
come;

And then descending met them at the
gates,

Embraced her with all welcome as a
friend,

And did her honour as the Prince's bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the
sun;

And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubric, the high
saint,

They twain were wedded with all cere-
mony.

And this was on the last year's Whit-
suntide.

But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved
her in it,

And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her, as him-
self

Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

And now this morning when he said to
her,

'Put on your worst and meanest dress,'
she found

And took it, and array'd herself therein.

II.

O purblind race of miserable men,

How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,

By taking true for false, or false for true;
Here find the foulest twal-gilt of the world

Groping, how many, until we pass and
reach

That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing
forth

That morning, when they both had got
to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passion-
ately,
And felt that tempest brooding round his
heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break
perforce
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said :
'Not at my side. I charge thee ride
before,
Ever a good way on before ; and this
I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
No, not a word !' and Enid was aghast ;
And forth they rode, but scarce three
paces on,
When crying out, 'Effeminate as I am,
I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
All shall be iron ;' he loosed a mighty
purse,
Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward
the squire.
So the last sight that Enid had of home
Was all the marble threshold flashing,
strown
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the
squire
Chafing his shoulder : then he cried again,
'To the wilds !' and Enid leading down
the tracks
Thro' which he bade her lead him on,
they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted
holds,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places of
the hern,
And wildernesses, perilous paths, they
rode :
Round was their pace at first, but
slacken'd soon :
A stranger meeting them had surely
thought

They rode so slowly and they look'd so
pale,
That each had suffer'd some exceeding
wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself,
'O I that wasted time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances,
To dress her beautifully and keep her
true'—
And there he broke the sentence in his
heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue
May break it, when his passion masters
him.
And she was ever praying the sweet
heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any
wound.
And ever in her mind she cast about
For that unnoticed failing in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so
cold ;
Till the great plover's human whistle
amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste
she fear'd
In every wavering brake an ambushade.
Then thought again, 'If there be such in
me,
I might amend it by the grace of Heaven,
If he would only speak and tell me of it.'

But when the fourth part of the day
was gone,
Then Enid was aware of three tall knights
On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all ;
And heard one crying to his fellow,
'Look,
Here comes a laggard hanging down his
head,
Who seems no bolder than a beaten
hound ;

Come, we will slay him and will have his
horse
And armour, and his damsel shall be
ours.'

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and
said :

'I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their caitiff talk ;
For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
Than that my lord should suffer loss or
shame.'

Then she went back some paces of
return,

Met his full frown timidly firm, and said ;
'My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
Waiting to fall on you, and heard them
boast
That they would slay you, and possess
your horse
And armour, and your damsel should be
theirs.'

He made a wrathful answer : 'Did I
wish

Your warning or your silence? one com-
mand
I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
And thus ye keep it ! Well then, look
—for now,
Whether ye wish me victory or defeat,
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
Yourself shall see my vigour is not lost.'

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit
three.
And at the midmost charging, Prince
Geraint
Drove the long spear a cubit thro' his
breast

And out beyond ; and then against his
brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken
on him

A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd
the twain

Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying
him,

Stript from the three dead wolves of
woman born

The three gay suits of armour which they
wore,

And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armour on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them
on

Before you ;' and she drove them thro'
the waste.

He follow'd nearer : ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on : he fain had spoken to
her,

And loosed in words of sudden fire the
wrath

And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all
within ;

But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
At once without remorse to strike her
dead,

Than to cry 'Halt,' and to her own
bright face

Accuse her of the least immodesty :
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth
the more

That she *could* speak whom his own ear
had heard

Call herself false : and suffering thus he
made

Minutes an age : but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly
arm'd,

Whereof one seem'd far larger than her
lord,

And shook her pulses, crying, ' Look, a
prize !

Three horses and three goodly suits of
arms,

And all in charge of whom ? a girl : set
on.'

' Nay,' said the second, ' yonder comes a
knight.'

The third, ' A craven ; how he hangs his
head.'

The giant answer'd merrily, ' Yea, but
one ?

Wait here, and when he passes fall upon
him.'

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and
said,

' I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villainy.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good ;
How should I dare obey him to his harm ?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me
for it,

I save a life dearer to me than mine.'

And she abode his coming, and said to
him

With timid firmness, ' Have I leave to
speak ?'

He said, ' Ye take it, speaking,' and she
spoke.

' There lurk three villains yonder in the
wood,

And each of them is wholly arm'd, and
one

Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say
That they will fall upon you while ye
pass.'

To which he flung a wrathful answer
back :

' And if there were an hundred in the
wood,

And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
And all at once should sally out upon me,

I swear it would not ruffle me so much
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,
And if I fall, cleave to the better man.'

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,
Not dare to watch the combat, only
breathe

Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a
breath.

And he, she dreaded most, bare down
upon him.

Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ; but
Geraint's,

A little in the late encounter strain'd,
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corselet
home,

And then brake short, and down his
enemy roll'd,

And there lay still ; as he that tells the
tale

Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
That had a sapling growing on it, slide
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls
to the beach,

And there lie still, and yet the sapling
grew :

So lay the man transfixt. His craven pair
Of comrades, making slowlier at the
Prince,

When now they saw their ludwark fallen
stroll;

On whom the victor, to confound them
more,

Spar'd with his terrible wavery : for as
one,

That listens near a torrent mountain-
brook,

All thro' the crash of the near cataract
hears

The drumming thunder of the huger fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear
His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,
And foemen scared, like that false pair
who turn'd

Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
Themselves had wrought on many an
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd
the lance

That pleased him best, and drew from
those dead wolves

Their three gay suits of armour, each from
each,

And bound them on their horses, each on
each.

And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them on
Before you,' and she drove them thro' the
wood.

He follow'd nearer still : the pain she
had

To keep them in the wild way of the wood,
Two sets of three lute with jingling
arms,

Together, served a little to disodge
The sharpness of that pass thro' the
heath

And they themselves, like creatures gently
soon

But into bad hands fall'n, and now so long,
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light
ears, and felt

Her low firm voice and tender government.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood
they past.

And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike
chased

In the brown wild, and mowers mowing
in it :

And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in
his hand

Bare victual for the mowers : and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale :
Then, moving downward to the meadow
ground,

He, when the fair-hair'd youth came by
him, said,

'Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so
faint.'

'Yes, willingly,' replied the youth : 'and
thou,

My lord, eat also, tho' the fire is scarce.
And only meet for mowers ;' then set
down

His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses graze, and ate them-
selves.

And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
To dine with her lord's pleasure : but
Geraint

Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found all empty, was
amazed ;

And 'Deo,' said he, 'I have eaten all,
lord, take

A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose
the best.'

He, reddening in extremity of delight,

'My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold.'

'Ye will be all the wealthier,' cried the
Prince.

'I take it as free gift, then,' said the boy,

'Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,

While your good damsel rests, return,
and fetch

Fresh victual for these mowers of our
Earl ;

For these are his, and all the field is his,
And I myself am his ; and I will tell
him

How great a man thou art : he loves to
know

When men of mark are in his territory :

And he will have thee to his palace here,
And serve thee costlier than with mowers'
fare.'

Then said Geraint, 'I wish no better
fare :

I never ate with angrier appetite

Than when I left your mowers dinnerless.

And into no Earl's palace will I go.

I know, God knows, too much of
palaces !

And if he want me, let him come to me.

But hire us some fair chamber for the
night,

And stalling for the horses, and return

With victual for these men, and let us
know.'

'Yea, my kind lord,' said the glad
youth, and went,

Held his head high, and thought himself
a knight,

And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,

Leading the horse, and they were left
alone.

But when the Prince had brought his
errant eyes

Home from the rock, sideways he let
them glance

At Enid, where she droopt : his own
false doom,

That shadow of mistrust should never
cross

Betwixt them, came upon him, and he
sigh'd ;

Then with another humorous ruth
remark'd

The lusty mowers labouring dinnerless,
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turn-
ing scythe,

And after nodded sleepily in the heat.

But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,

And all the windy clamour of the daws
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the
grass

There growing longest by the meadow's
edge,

And into many a listless annulet,

Now over, now beneath her marriage
ring,

Wove and unweave it, till the boy return'd

And told them of a chamber, and they
went ;

Where, after saying to her, 'If ye will,

Call for the woman of the house,' to which
She answer'd, 'Thanks, my lord ;' the
two remain'd

Apart by all the chamber's width, and
mute

As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of
birth,

Or two wild men supporters of a shield,

Painted, who stare at open space, nor
glance

The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the
street,

GERAINT AND ENID.

And heel against the pavement echoing,
 burst
 Their drowse; and either started while
 the door,
 Push'd from without, drove backward to
 the wall.
 And midmost of a roat of roisterers,
 Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
 Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
 Enter'd, the wild lord of the place—
 Limours.
 He moving up with pliant courtliness,
 Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,
 In the mid-warmth of welcome and grasp'd
 hand,
 Found Enid with the corner of his eye,
 And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
 Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly
 cheer
 To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
 According to his fashion, bad the host
 Call in what men soever were his friends,
 And feast with these in honour of their
 Earl;
 'And care not for the cost; the cost is
 mine.'

And wine and food were brought, and
 Earl Limours
 Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
 Free tales, and took the word and play'd
 upon it,
 And made it of two colours; for his talk,
 When wine and free companions kindled
 him,
 Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem
 Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince
 To laughter and his courtesies to applause.
 Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd
 Limours,
 'Your leave, my lord, to cross the room,
 and speak

To your good damsel there who sits apart,
 And seems so lonely?' 'My free leave,'
 he said;
 'Get her to speak; she doth not speak to
 me.'
 Then rose Limours, and looking at his
 feet,
 Like him who treads the bridge he fears
 may fail,
 Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes,
 Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisper-
 ingly:

'Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
 Enid, my early and my only love,
 Enid, the loss of whom hath turn'd me
 wild—
 What chance is this? how is it I see you
 here?
 Ye are in my power at last, are in my
 power.
 Yet fear me not: I call mine own self
 wild,
 But keep a touch of sweet civility
 Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.
 I thought, but that your father came
 between,
 In former days you saw me favourably.
 And if it were so do not keep it back:
 Make me a little happier: let me know it:
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you
 are.
 And, Enid, you and he, I see with joy,
 Ye sit apart, you do not speak to him,
 You come with no intention, page or
 maid,
 To serve you—deed he love you as of old?
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
 Tho' men may bicker with the things they
 love,
 They would not make them laughable
 all eyes,

Not while they loved them ; and your
wretched dress,

A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks
Your story, that this man loves you no
more.

Your beauty is no beauty to him now :
A common chance—right well I know it
—pall'd—

For I know men : nor will ye win him
back,

For the man's love once gone never
returns.

But here is one who loves you as of old ;
With more exceeding passion than of old :
Good, speak the word : my followers ring
him round :

He sits unarm'd ; I hold a finger up ;
They understand : nay ; I do not mean
blood :

Nor need ye look so scared at what I say :
My malice is no deeper than a moat,
No stronger than a wall : there is the
keep ;

He shall not cross us more ; speak but
the word :

Or speak it not ; but then by Him that
made me

The one true lover whom you ever own'd,
I will make use of all the power I have.

O pardon me ! the madness of that hour,
When first I parted from thee, moves me
yet.'

At this the tender sound of his own
voice

And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
Made his eye moist ; but Enid fear'd his
eyes,

Moist as they were, wine-heated from the
feast ;

And answer'd with such craft as women
know,

Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance

That breaks upon them perilously, and
said :

' Earl, if you love me as in former years,
And do not practise on me, come with
morn,
And snatch me from him as by violence ;
Leave me to-night : I am weary to the
death.'

Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd
plume
Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-
amorous Earl,
And the stout Prince bad him a loud
good-night.

He moving homeward babbled to his men,
How Enid never loved a man but him,
Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,
Debating his command of silence given,
And that she now perforce must violate it,
Held commune with herself, and while
she held

He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart
To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly
pleas'd

To find him yet unwounded after fight,
And hear him breathing low and equally.
Anon she rose, and stepping lightly,
heap'd

The pieces of his armour in one place,
All to be there against a sudden need ;
Then dozed awhile herself, but overtoil'd
By that day's grief and travel, evermore
Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn, and
then

Went slipping down horrible precipices,
And strongly striking out her limbs
awoke ;

Then thought she heard the wild Earl at
the door,

With all his rout of random followers,
 Sounded a dreadful trumpet, summoning
 her ;
 Which was the red cock shouting to the
 light,
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy
 world,
 And glimmer'd on his armour in the room.
 And once again she rose to look at it,
 But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the
 casque
 fell, and he started up and stared at her.
 Then breaking his command of silence
 given,
 She told him all that Earl Limours had
 said,
 Except the passage that he loved her not ;
 Nor left untold the craft herself had used ;
 But ended with apology so sweet,
 Low-spoken, and of so few words, and
 seem'd
 so justified by that necessity,
 That tho' he thought ' was it for him she
 wept
 in Devon ? ' he but gave a wrathful groan,
 saying, ' Your sweet faces make good
 fellows fools
 And traitors. Call the host and bid him
 bring
 charger and palfrey.' So she glided out
 Among the heavy breathings of the house,
 And like a household Spirit at the wall-
 chat, till she woke the sleepers, and
 return'd :
 Then tending her rough lord, tho' all
 unask'd,
 In silence, did his service as a squire :
 Till arising arm'd he found the host and
 cried,
 ' Thy commanding, friend ? ' and set his
 hand to it. ' Take
 thy horse and thy armour : ' and the
 host.

Suddenly honest, answer'd in answer,
 ' My lord, I scarce have spent the worth
 of one !'
 ' Ye will be all ; he wouldst thou,' said the
 Prince,
 And then to Enid, ' Forward ! and to-
 day
 I charge you, Enid, more especially,
 What thing soever ye may hear, or see,
 Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
 To charge you) that ye speak not but
 obey.'

And Enid answer'd, ' Yea, my lord,
 I know
 Your wish, and would obey ; but riding
 first,
 I hear the violent threats you do not hear,
 I see the danger which you cannot see :
 Then not to give you warning, that seems
 hard ;
 Almost beyond me ; yet I would obey.'

' Yea so,' said he, ' do it : be not too
 wise ;
 Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
 Not all mismated with a yawning clown,
 But one with arms to guard his head and
 yours,
 With eyes to find you out however far,
 And ears to hear you even in his dreams.'

With that he turn'd and look'd as
 keenly at her
 As careful robbers eye the deliver's tool :
 And that within her, which a wanton fool,
 Or hasty judger would have call'd her
 good,
 Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
 And Geraint took his hand and was gone.

Then forward by a way which, beaten
 broad,

Led from the territory of false Limours
 To the waste earldom of another earl,
 Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd
 the Bull,
 Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
 Once she look'd back, and when she saw
 him ride
 More near by many a rood than yester-
 morn,
 It wellnigh made her cheerful; till
 Geraint
 Waving an angry hand as who should
 say
 'Ye watch me,' sadden'd all her heart
 again.
 But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
 The sound of many a heavily-galloping
 hoof
 Smote on her ear, and turning round she
 saw
 Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.
 Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
 And yet to give him warning, for he rode
 As if he heard not, moving back she held
 Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
 At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
 Because she kept the letter of his word,
 Was in a manner pleased, and turning,
 stood.
 And in the moment after, wild Limours,
 Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-
 cloud
 Whose skirts are loosen'd by the breaking
 storm,
 Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
 And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
 Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with him,
 and bore
 Down by the length of lance and arm
 beyond
 The crupper, and so left him stunn'd or
 dead,
 And overthrew the next that follow'd him,

And blindly rush'd on all the rout behind.
 But at the flash and motion of the man
 They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal
 Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
 Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
 Come slipping o'er their shadows on the
 sand,
 But if a man who stands upon the brink
 But lift a shining hand against the sun,
 There is not left the twinkle of a fin
 Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
 So, scared but at the motion of the man,
 Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
 And left him lying in the public way;
 So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled
 Geraint,
 Who saw the chargers of the two that
 fell
 Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly,
 Mixt with the flyers. 'Horse and man,'
 he said,
 'All of one mind and all right-honest
 friends!
 Not a hoof left: and I methinks till now
 Was honest—paid with horses and with
 arms;
 I cannot steal or plunder, no nor beg:
 And so what say ye, shall we strip him
 there
 Your lover? has your palfrey heart enough
 To bear his armour? shall we fast, or
 dine?
 No?—then do thou, being right honest,
 pray
 That we may meet the horsemen of Earl
 Doorm,
 I too would still be honest.' Thus he
 said:
 And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
 And answering not one word, she led the
 way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
But coming back he learns it, and the loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to
death ;

So fare'd it with Geraint, who being prick'd
In combat with the follower of Limours,
Bled underneath his armour secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
What ail'd him, hardly knowing it himself,
Till his eye darken'd and his helmet
wagg'd :

And at a sudden swerving of the road,
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,
The Prince, without a word, from his
horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his
arms.

Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye
Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,
And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blistering
sun,

And swathed the hurt that drain'd her
dear lord's life.

Then after all was done that hand could do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
A woman weeping for her murder'd mate
Was cared as much for as a summer shower :
One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him :
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
Rode on a mission to the banlit Earl ;
Half whistling and half singing a coarse
song,

He drove the dust against her veilless eyes :

Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in his
fear ;

At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,
And scour'd into the coppices and was lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved
like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl
Doorm,
Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet
beard,
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
Came riding with a hundred lances up ;
But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
Cried out with a big voice, ' What, is he
dead ?'

' No, no, not dead !' she answer'd in all
haste.

' Would some of your kind people take
him up,

And bear him hence out of this cruel sun ?
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead.'

Then said Earl Doorm : ' Well, if he be
not dead,
Why wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a child.
And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;
Your wailing will not quicken him : dead
or not,

Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
Yet, since the face is comely—some of you,
Here, take him up, and bear him to our
hall :
An if he live, we will have him of our
band ;
And if he die, why earth has earth enough
To hide him. See ye take the charger too.
A noble one.'

He spake, and past away,
But left two brawny spearmen, who
advanced,

Each growling like a dog, when his good
bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,
Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians
growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
Their chance of booty from the morning's
raid,

Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,
Such as they brought upon their forays out
For those that might be wounded ; laid
him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and took
And bore him to the naked hall of Doorm,
(His gentle charger following him unled)
And cast him and the bier in which he lay
Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
And then departed, hot in haste to join
Their luckier mates, but growling as
before,

And cursing their lost time, and the dead
man,

And their own Earl, and their own souls,
and her.

If they might as well have blest her : she
was deaf

To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,
There in the naked hall, propping his
head,

And chafing his pale hands, and calling to
him.

Till at the last he waken'd from his swoon,
And found his own dear bride propping
his head,

And chafing his faint hands, and calling
to him ;

And felt the warm tears falling on his face ;
And said to his own heart, 'She weeps
for me.'

And yet lay still, and feign'd himself as
dead,

That he might prove her to the utter-
most,

And say to his own heart, 'She weeps
for me.'

But in the falling afternoon return'd
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the
hall.

His lusty spearmen follow'd him with
noise :

Each hurling down a heap of things that
rang

Against the pavement, cast his lance
aside,

And doff'd his helm : and then there
flutter'd in,

Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,

And mingled with the spearmen : and
Earl Doorm

Struck with a knife's haft hard against the
board,

And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his
spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and
quarter beeves,

And all the hall was dim with steam of
flesh :

And none spake word, but all sat down
at once,

And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them
feed ;

Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless
tribe.

But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he
would,

He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and
found

A damsel drooping in a corner of it.

Then he remember'd her, and how she
 wept ;
 And out of her there came a power upon
 him ;
 And rising on the sudden he said, 'Eat !
 I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
 God's curse, it makes me mad to see you
 weep.
 Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had
 your good man,
 For were I dead who is it would weep
 for me ?
 Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
 And so there lived some colour in your
 cheek,
 There is not one among my gentlewomen
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.
 But listen to me, and by me be ruled,
 And I will do the thing I have not done,
 For yeshall share my earldom with me, girl,
 And we will live like two birds in one
 nest,
 And I will fetch you forage from all fields,
 For I compel all creatures to my will.'

He spoke ; the brawny spearman let
 his cheek
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and
 turning stared ;
 While some, whose souls the old serpent
 long had drawn
 Down, as the worm draws in the wither'd
 leaf
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at other's
 ear
 What shall not be recorded—women they,
 Women, or what had been those gracious
 things,
 But now desired the humbling of their
 best,
 Yea, would have help'd him to it ; and
 all at once

They hated her, who took no thought of
 them,
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek head
 yet
 Drooping, 'I pray you of your courtesy,
 He being as he is, to let me be.'

She spake so low he hardly heard her
 speak,
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied
 With what himself had done so graciously,
 Assumed that she had thank'd him, add-
 ing, 'Yea,
 Eat and be glad, for I account you mine.'

She answer'd meekly, 'How should I
 be glad
 Henceforth in all the world at anything,
 Until my lord arise and look upon me ?'

Here the huge Earl cried out upon her
 talk,
 As all but empty heart and weariness—
 And sickly nothing ; suddenly seized on
 her,
 And bare her by main violence to the
 board,
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,
 'Eat.'

'No, no,' and Enid vast, 'I will not
 eat
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
 And out with me.' 'Dumb, then,' he
 answer'd, 'Here !'
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held it
 to her,)
 'Lo ! I, myself, when flush'd with fight,
 or hot,
 God's curse, with anger—often I my-
 self,
 Before I well have drunken, scarce can
 eat :

Drink therefore and the wine will change
your will.'

'Not so,' she cried, 'by Heaven, I will
not drink
Till my dear lord arise and bid me do it,
And drink with me; and if he rise no
more,
I will not look at wine until I die.'

At this he turn'd all red and paced his
hall,
Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper
lip,
And coming up close to her, said at last :
'Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,
Take warning; yonder man is surely
dead;
And I compel all creatures to my will.
Not eat nor drink? And wherefore wail
for one,
Who put your beauty to this flout and
scorn
By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,
Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
That I forbear you thus: cross me no
more.
At least put off to please me this poor
gown,
This silken rag, this beggar-woman's
weed:
I love that beauty should go beautifully:
For see ye not my gentlewomen here,
How gay, how suited to the house of one
Who loves that beauty should go beauti-
fully?
Rise therefore; robe yourself in this:
obey.'

He spoke, and one among his gentle-
women
Display'd a splendid silk of foreign loom,
Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue

Play'd into green, and thicker down the
front

With jewels than the sward with drops of
dew,
When all night long a cloud clings to the
hill,
And with the dawn ascending lets the
day
Strike where it clung: so thickly shone
the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,
With life-long injuries burning unavenged,
And now their hour has come; and Enid
said:

'In this poor gown my dear lord found
me first,
And loved me serving in my father's hall:
In this poor gown I rode with him to
court,
And there the Queen array'd me like the
sun:
In this poor gown he bade me clothe
myself,
When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honour, where no honour can be gain'd:
And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man,
And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough:
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He be as he is, to let me be.'

Then strode the brute Earl up and down
his hall,
And took his russet beard between his
teeth;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his
mood
Crying, 'I count it of no more avail,

Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with
you ;
Take my salute,' unknighly with flat
hand,
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, 'He had not dared
to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was
dead,'
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry,
As if a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming thro' the
wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his
sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),
Made but a single bound, and with a
sweep of it
Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like a
ball
The russet-bearded head roll'd on the
floor.
So died Earl Doorn by him he counted
dead.
And all the men and women in the hall
Rose when they saw the dead man rise,
and fled
Velling as from a spectre, and the two
Were left alone together, and he said :

'Enid, I have used you worse than that
dead man ;
Doubt you more wrong : we both have
undergone
That trouble which has left me thrice-
your own :
Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you yester-
morn—

You might have been sleeping, but I heard your
say,
I heard you say, that you were no true
wife :
I swear I will not ask your meaning in it
I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than
doubt.'

And Enid could not say one tender word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the heart :
She only pray'd him, 'Fly, they will return
And slay you ; fly, your charger is without,
My palfrey lost.' 'Then, Enid, shall you
ride
Behind me.' 'Yea,' said Enid, 'let us go.'
And moving out they found the stately
horse,
Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,
and stoop'd
With a low whinny toward the pair : and
she
Kiss'd the white star upon his noble front,
Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse
Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on his
foot
She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd
his face
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her
arms—
About him, and as once they rode away,

And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Gave purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that precious
hour
Put hands to hand beneath her husband's
heart,
And felt him hers again : she did not weep,
But her live man's eyes came a happy mist.

Like that which kept the heart of Eden
green

Before the useful trouble of the rain :
Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
As not to see before them on the path,
Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his
lance

In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had
chanced,

Shriek'd to the stranger 'Slay not a dead
man !'

'The voice of Enid,' said the knight ; but
she,

Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd,
Was moved so much the more, and
shriek'd again,

'O cousin, slay not him who gave you life.'
And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :
'My lord Geraint, I greet you with all
love ;

I took you for a bandit knight of Doorn ;
And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
Who love you, Prince, with something of
the love

Wherewith we love the Heaven that
chastens us.

For once, when I was up so high in pride
That I was halfway down the slope to
Hell,

By overthrowing me you threw me higher.
Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table
Round,

And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
I come the mouthpiece of our King to
Doorn

(The King is close behind me) bidding him
Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
Submit, and hear the judgment of the
King.'

'He hears the judgment of the King of
kings,'

Cried the wan Prince ; 'and lo, the
powers of Doorn

Are scatter'd,' and he pointed to the field,
Where, huddled here and there on mound
and knoll,

Were men and women staring and aghast,
While some yet fled ; and then he plainlier
told

How the huge Earl lay slain within his
hall.

But when the knight besought him,
'Follow me,

Prince, to the camp, and in the King's
own ear

Speak what has chanced ; ye surely have
endured

Strange chances here alone ;' that other
flush'd,

And hung his head, and halted in reply,
Fearing the mild face of the blameless
King,

And after madness acted question ask'd :
Till Edyrn crying, 'If ye will not go
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,'
'Enough,' he said, 'I follow,' and they
went.

But Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
And one from Edyrn. Every now and
then,

When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
From which old fires have broken, men
may fear

Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said :

'Fair and dear cousin, you that most
had cause

To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
Yourself were first the blameless cause to
make

My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood
Break into furious flame; being repulsed
By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and
wrought

Until I overturn'd him; then set up
(With one main purpose ever at my heart)
My haughty jousts, and took a paramour;
Did her mock-honour as the fairest fair,
And, toppling over all antagonism,
So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself
Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad:
And, but for my main purpose in these
jousts,

I should have slain your father, seized
yourself.

I lived in hope that sometime you would
come

To these my lists with him whom best you
loved;

And there, poor cousin, with your meek
blue eyes,

The truest eyes that ever answer'd Heaven,
Behold me overturn and trample on him.
Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd
to me,

I should not less have kill'd him. And
you came,—

But once you came,—and with your own
true eyes

Beheld the man you loved (I speak as one
Speaks of a service done him) overthrow
My proud self, and my purpose three
years old,

And set his foot upon me, and give me
life.

There was I broken down; there was I
saved:

Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating the
life

He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
And all the penance the Queen laid upon
me

Was but to rest awhile within her court;

Where first as sullen as a beast new-caged,
And waiting to be treated like a wolf,
Because I knew my deeds were known, I
found,

Instead of scornful pity or pale scorn,
Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace
Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
To glance behind me at my former life,
And find that it had been the wolf;
indeed.

And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high
saint,

Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
Which, when it weds with manhood,
makes a man.

And you were often there about the Queen,
But saw me not, or mark'd not if you
saw;

Nor did I care or dare to speak with you,
But kept myself aloof till I was changed;
And fear not, cousin; I am changed
indeed.'

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
Like simple noble natures, credulous
Of what they long for, good in friend or
foe.

There most in those who most have done
them ill.

And, when they reach'd the camp the
King himself

Advanced to greet them, and beholding
her

Ther' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a
word,

But went apart with Elym, whom he held
In converse for a little, and return'd,
And, gravely smiling, lifted her from
horse,

And kiss'd her with all pureness, brother-
like,

And show'd an empty tent allotted her,
 And glancing for a minute, till he saw her
 Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and
 said :

' Prince, when of late ye pray'd me for
 my leave
 To move to your own land, and there
 defend
 Your marches, I was prick'd with some
 reproof,
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate and
 be,
 By having look'd too much thro' alien
 eyes,
 And wrought too long with delegated
 hands,
 Not used mine own : but now behold me
 come
 To cleanse this common sewer of all my
 realm,
 With Edyrn and with others : have ye
 look'd
 At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly
 changed?
 This work of his is great and wonderful.
 His very face with change of heart is
 changed,
 The world will not believe a man repents:
 And this wise world of ours is mainly
 right.
 Full seldom doth a man repent, or use
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious
 quitch
 Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
 And make all clean, and plant himself
 afresh.
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
 As I will weed this land before I go.
 I, therefore, made him of our Table
 Round,
 Not rashly, but have proved him every-
 way

One of our noblest, our most valorous,
 Sanest and most obedient : and indeed
 This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
 After a life of violence, seems to me
 A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
 Than if some knight of mine, risking his
 life,
 My subject with my subjects under him,
 Should make an onslaught single on a
 realm
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one,
 And were himself nigh wounded to the
 death.'

So spake the King ; low bow'd the
 Prince, and felt
 His work was neither great nor wonderful,
 And past to Enid's tent ; and thither came
 The King's own leech to look into his
 hurt ;
 And Enid tended on him there ; and there
 Her constant motion round him, and the
 breath
 Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
 Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
 With deeper and with ever deeper love,
 As the south-west that blowing Bala lake
 Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his
 hurt,
 The blameless King went forth and cast
 his eyes
 On each of all whom Uther left in charge
 Long since, to guard the justice of the
 King :
 He look'd and found them wanting ; and
 as now
 Men weed the white horse on the Berk-
 shire hills
 To keep him bright and clean as hereto-
 fore,
 He rooted out the slothful officer

Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at
 wrong,
 And in their chairs set up a stronger race
 With hearts and hands, and sent a thou-
 sand men
 To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
 Clear'd the dark places and let in the law,
 And broke the bandit holds and cleansed
 the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again,
 they past
 With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.
 There the great Queen once more em-
 braced her friend,
 And clothed her in apparel like the day.
 And tho' Geraint could never take again
 That comfort from their converse which
 he took
 Before the Queen's fair name was breathed
 upon,
 He rested well content that all was well.
 Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them to the
 shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own
 land.

And there he kept the justice of the King
 So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
 Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died:
 And being ever foremost in the chase,
 And victor at the tilt and tournament,
 They call'd him the great Prince and man
 of men.

But Enid, whom the ladies loved to call
 Enid the Fair, a grateful people named
 Enid the Good; and in their halls arose
 The cry of children, Enids and Geraints
 Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more,
 But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd
 A happy life with a fair death, and fell
 Against the heathen of the Northern Sea
 In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

MERLIN AND VIVIAN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds
 were still,
 And in the wild woods of Broceliande,
 Before an oak, so hollow, huge and old
 It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,
 At Merlin's feet the wily Vivian lay.

Whence came she? One that bare in
 bitter grudge
 The scorn of Arthur and his Table, Mark
 The Cornish King, had heard a wandering
 voice,
 A minstrel of Caerleon by strong storm
 Blown into shelter at Tintagil, say
 That out of naked knightlike purity
 Sir Lancelot worshipt no unmarried girl
 But the great Queen herself, fought in her
 name,
 Sware by her—vows like theirs, that high
 in heaven
 Love most, but neither marry, nor are
 given
 In marriage, angels of our Lord's report.

He ceased, and then—for Vivian
 sweetly said
 (She sat beside the banquet nearest Mark),
 'And is the fair example follow'd, Sir,
 In Arthur's household?'—answer'd inno-
 cently:

'Ay, by some ew—ay, truly—youths
 that hold
 It more besemes the perfect virgin knight
 To worship woman as true wife beyond
 All hopes of gaining, than as maiden girl.
 They place their pride in Lancelot and
 the Queen.
 So passionate for an utter purity
 Beyond the limit of their bond, are these.
 For Arthur bound them not to singleness.

Brave hearts and clean ! and yet— God
guide them—young.’

Then Mark was half in heart to hurl
his cup
Straight at the speaker, but forbore : he
rose
To leave the hall, and, Vivien following
him,
Turn’d to her : ‘Here are snakes within
the grass ;
And you methinks, O Vivien, save ye fear
The monkish manhood, and the mask of pure
Worn by this court, can stir them till they
sting.’

And Vivien answer’d, smiling scorn-
fully,
Why fear? because that foster’d at *thy*
court
I savour of thy—virtues? fear them? no.
As Love, if Love be perfect, casts out fear,
So Hate, if Hate be perfect, casts out fear.
My father died in battle against the King,
My mother on his corpse in open field ;
She bore me there, for born from death
was I
Among the dead and sown upon the
wind—
And then on thee ! and shown the truth
betimes,
That old true filth, and bottom of the well,
Where Truth is hidden. Gracious lessons
thine
And maxims of the mud ! “This Arthur
pure !
Great Nature thro’ the flesh herself hath
made
Gives him the lie ! There is no being
pure,
My cherub; saith not Holy Writ the
same ?”—

If I were Arthur, I would have thy blood.
Thy blessing, stainless King ! I bring
thee back,
When I have ferreted out their burrow-
ings,
The hearts of all this Order in mine
hand—
Ay—so that fate and craft and folly close,
Perchance, one curl of Arthur’s golden
beard.
To me this narrow grizzled fork of thine
Is cleaner-fashion’d—Well, I loved thee
first,
That warps the wit.’

Loud laugh’d the graceless Mark.
But Vivien, into Camelot stealing, lodged
Low in the city, and on a festal day
When Guinevere was crossing the great
hall
Cast herself down, knelt to the Queen,
and wail’d.

‘Why kneel ye there? What evil have
ye wrought?
Rise !’ and the damsel bidden rise arose
And stood with folded hands and down-
ward eyes
Of glancing corner, and all meekly said,
‘None wrought, but suffer’d much, an
orphan maid !
My father died in battle for thy King,
My mother on his corpse—in open field,
The sad sea-sounding wastes of Lyonesse—
Poor wretch—no friend !—and now by
Mark the King
For that small charm of feature mine,
pursued—
If any such be mine—I fly to thee.
Save, save me thou—Woman of women—
thine
The wreath of beauty, thine the crown of
power,

Be thine the balm of pity, O Heaven's
 own white
 Earth-angel, stainless bride of stainless
 King—
 Help, for he follows ! take me to thyself !
 O yield me shelter for mine innocence
 Among thy maidens !'

Here her slow-sweet eyes
 Fear-tremulous, but humbly hopeful, rose,
 Fix'd on her hearer's, while the Queen
 who stood
 All glittering like May sunshine on May
 leaves
 In green and gold, and plumed with green
 replied,
 'Peace, child ! of overpraise and over-
 blame
 We choose the last. Our noble Arthur,
 him
 Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear and
 know.
 Nay—we believe all evil of thy Mark—
 Well, we shall test thee farther ; but this
 hour
 We ride a-hawking with Sir Lancelot.
 He hath given us a fair falcon which he
 train'd ;
 We go to prove it. Bide ye here the
 while.'

She past ; and Vivien murmur'd after
 'Come !
 I bide the while.' Then thro' the portal-
 arch
 Peering askance, and muttering broken-
 wise,
 As one that labours with an evil dream,
 Behold the Queen and Lancelot get to
 horse.
 'Is that the Lancelot ? goodly—ay, too
 goodly :

Countess—sincerely for guarantee—takes
 her hand—
 That glance of theirs, but for the street,
 had been
 A clinging kiss—how hand fingers to
 hand !
 Let go at last !—they ride away—no hand-
 For waterfowl. Knygall's game is mine.
 For such a supernatural natural bond.
 As that gray cricket chirpt of at our
 hearth—
 Touch flax with flame—a glance will serve—
 —the liars !
 Ah little rat that borest in the dyke
 Thy hole by night to let the boundless deep
 Down upon far-off cities while they
 dance—
 Or dream—of thee they dream'd not—
 nor of me
 These—ay, but each of either : ride, and
 dream
 The mortal dream that never yet was
 mine—
 Ride, ride and dream until ye wake—to
 me !
 These narrow ones and lubber King,
 farewell !
 For Lancelot will be gracious to the rat,
 And our wise Queen, if knowing that I
 know,
 Will hate, loathe, fear—but honour me
 the more.'

Yet while they rode together down the
 plain,
 Their talk was all of training, terms of art,
 Dries and cooling, brass, leather and lure.
 'She is too cold,' he said 'to check or
 pierce,
 Nor will she take ; there is no looseness
 in her.'
 Here when the Queen demanded as by
 chance

‘Know ye the stranger woman?’ ‘Let
her be,’
Said Lancelot and unhooded casting off
The goodly falcon free ; she tower’d ;
her bells,
Tone under tone, shrill’d ; and they lifted
up
Their eager faces, wondering at the
strength,
Boldness and royal knighthood of the bird
Who pounced her quarry and slew it.
Many a time
As once—of old—among the flowers—
they rode.

But Vivien half-forgotten of the Queen
Among her damsels broidering sat, heard,
watch’d
And whisper’d : thro’ the peaceful court
she crept
And whisper’d : then as Arthur in the
highest
Leaven’d the world, so Vivien in the
lowest,
Arriving at a time of golden rest,
And sowing one ill hint from ear to ear,
While all the heathen lay at Arthur’s feet,
And no quest came, but all was joust and
play,
Leaven’d his hall. They heard and let
her be.

Thereafter as an enemy that has left
Death in the living waters, and with-
drawn,
The wily Vivien stole from Arthur’s court.

She hated all the knights, and heard in
thought
Their lavish comment when her name
was named.
For once, when Arthur walking all alone,
Vext at a rumour issued from herself

Of some corruption crept among his
knights,
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair,
Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy
mood
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken
voice,
And flutter’d adoration, and at last
With dark sweet hints of some who
prized him more
Than who should prize him most ; at
which the King
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by :
But one had watch’d, and had not held
his peace :
It made the laughter of an afternoon
That Vivien should attempt the blameless
King.
And after that, she set herself to gain
Him, the most famous man of all those
times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their
arts,
Had built the King his havens, ships,
and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry
heavens ;
The people call’d him Wizard ; whom at
first
She play’d about with slight and sprightly
talk,
And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom’d
points
Of slander, glancing here and grazing
there ;
And yielding to his kindlier moods, the
Seer
Would watch her at her petulance, and
play,
Ev’n when they seem’d unloveable, and
laugh
As those that watch a kitten ; thus he
grew

Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and she,

Percieving that she was but half disdain'd,
began to break her sports with graver fits,
Fare red or pale, would often when they met

Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
With such a fixt devotion, that the old man,

Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at times

Would flatter his own wish in age for loss,
And half believe her true: for thus at times

He waver'd; but that other clung to him,
Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went:

Then fell on Merlin a great melancholy;
He walk'd with dreams and darkness, and he found

A doom that ever poised itself to fall,
An ever-moaning battle in the mist,
World-war of dying flesh against the life,
Death in all life and lying in all love,
The meanest having power upon the highest,

And the high purpose broken by the worm.

So leaving Arthur's court he gain'd the beach;

There found a little boat, and stept into it;

And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd her not.

She took the helm and he the sail; the boat

Drove with a sudden wind across the deeps,

And touching Breton sands, they disembark'd.

And then she follow'd Merlin all the way,
Even to the wild woods of Broceland.

For Merlin once had told her of a charm
The which if any wrought on anyone
With woven paces and with waving arms,
The man so wrought on ever seem'd to be
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
From which was no escape for evermore;
And none could find that man for evermore.

Nor could he see but him who wrought the charm

Coming and going, and he lay as dead
And lost to life and use and name and fame.

And Vivien ever sought to work the charm

Upon the great Enchanter of the Times,
As fancying that her glory would be great
According to his greatness whom she quench'd.

There lay she all her length and kiss'd his feet,

As if in deepest reverence and in love,
A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe

Of samite without price, that more express'd
Than hid her, clung about her lissome limbs,

In colour like the satin-shining palm
On shallows in the windy gleams of March;
And while she kiss'd them, crying,

'Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro' the world,

And I will pay you worship; tread me down

And I will kiss you for it;' he was mute;
So dark a forethought roll'd about his brain,

As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall

In silence; wherefore, when she lifted up

A face of sad appeal, and spake and said,
 'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and again,
 'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and once
 more,

'Great Master, do ye love me?' he was
 mute.

And lissome Vivien, holding by his heel,
 Writhed toward him, slid up his knee
 and sat,

Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
 Together, curved an arm about his neck,
 Clung like a snake; and letting her left
 hand

Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a leaf,
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to
 part

The lists of such a beard as youth gone out
 Had left in ashes: then he spoke and said,
 Not looking at her, 'Who are wise in love
 Love most, say least,' and Vivien answer'd
 quick,

'I saw the little elf-god eyeless once
 In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot;
 But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid
 child!

Yet you are wise who say it; let me think
 Silence is wisdom: I am silent then,
 And ask no kiss; ' then adding all at once,
 'And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom,'
 drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
 Across her neck and bosom to her knee,
 And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
 Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
 Who meant to eat her up in that wild
 wood

Without one word. So Vivien call'd
 herself,

But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
 Veil'd in gray vapour; till he sadly
 smiled:

'To what request for what strange boon,'
 he said,

'Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries,
 O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks,
 For these have broken up my melancholy.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,
 'What, O my Master, have ye found
 your voice?

I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at
 last!

But yesterday you never open'd lip,
 Except indeed to drink: no cup had we:
 In mine own lady palms I cull'd the
 spring

That gather'd trickling dropwise from the
 cleft,

And made a pretty cup of both my hands
 And offer'd you it kneeling: then you
 drank

And knew no more, nor gave me one
 poor word;

O no more thanks than might a goat have
 given

With no more sign of reverence than a
 beard.

And when we halted at that other well,
 And I was faint to swooning, and you lay
 Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of
 those

Deep meadows we had traversed, did you
 know

That Vivien bathed your feet before her
 own?

And yet no thanks: and all thro' this wild
 wood

And all this morning when I fondled you:
 Boon, ay, there was a boon, one not so
 strange—

How had I wrong'd you? surely ye are
 wise,

But such a silence is more wise than kind.'

And Merlin lock'd hi hand in hers and
 said:

'O did ye never lie upon the shore,
And watch the curl'd white of the coming
wave
Glass'd in the slippery sand before it
breaks?

Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,
Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,
Had I for three days such, ready to fall.

And thus I rose and fled from Arthur's
court

To break the mould. You follow'd me
unask'd ;

And when I look'd, and saw you follow-
ing still,

My mind involved yourself the nearest
thing

In that mind-mist : for shall I tell you
truth?

You seem'd that wave about to break upon
me

And sweep me from my hold upon the
world,

My use and name and fame. Your pardon,
child.

Your pretty sports have brighten'd all
again.

And ask your boon, for lo! I owe you
thrice,

Once for wrong done you by confusion, next

For thanks it seems till now neglected, last
For these your dainty gambols : wherefore
ask ;

And take this boon so strange and not so
strange.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn-
fully :

'O not so strange as my long asking it,
Not yet so strange as you yourself are
strange,

Nor half so strange as that dark mood of
yours.

I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine ;

And see, yourself have own'd ye did me
wrong.

The people call you purpter : let it be
but not of those that can expound them-
selves.

Take Vivien for expounder ; she will call
That three-days-long presageful gloom of
yours

No presage, but the same mistrustful mood
That makes you seem less noble than
yourself,

Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,
Now ask'd again : for see you not, dear
love,

That such a mood as that, which lately
gloom'd

Your fancy when ye saw me following you,
Must make me fear still more you are not
mine,

Must make me yearn still more to prove
you mine,

And make me wish still more to learn
this charm

Of woven paces and of waving hands.

As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.

The charm so taught will charm us both
to rest.

For, grant me some slight power upon
your fate,

I, feeling that you felt me worthy trust,
Should rest and let you rest, knowing you
mine.

And therefore be so great as ye are named.
Not muffled round with selfish reticence.

How hard you look and how strongly !

O, if you think this wickedness in me,

That I should prove it on you unaware,

That makes me passing wrathful ; then
our bond

Had best be loosed for ever ; but think
of me,

By Heaven that hears I tell you the clean
truth

As clean as blood of babes, as white as
milk :

O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
If these unwitty wandering wits of mine,
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
Have tript on such conjectural treachery—
May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir
hell

Down, down, and close again, and nip
me flat,

If I be such a traitress. Yield my boon,
Till which I scarce can yield you all I am ;
And grant my re-reiterated wish,
The great proof of your love : because I
think,

However wise, ye hardly know me yet.'

And Merlin loosed his hand from hers
and said,

'I never was less wise, however wise,
Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of trust,
Than when I told you first of such a
charm.

Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
Too much I trusted when I told you that,
And stirr'd this vice in you which ruin'd
man

Thro' woman the first hour ; for howsoe'er
In children a great curiousness be well,
Who have to learn themselves and all the
world,

In you, that are no child, for still I find
Your face is practised when I spell the
lines,

I call it,—well, I will not call it vice :
But since you name yourself the summer
fly,

I well could wish a cobweb for the gnat,
That settles, beaten back, and beaten back
Settles, till one could yield for weariness :
But since I will not yield to give you power
Upon my life and use and name and fame,
Why will ye never ask some other boon ?

Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too
much.'

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted
maid

That ever bided tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyelid wet with tears :
'Nay, Master, be not wrathful with your
maid ;

Caress her : let her feel herself forgiven
Who feels no heart to ask another boon.

I think ye hardly know the tender rhyme
Of "trust me not at all or all in all."
I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it once,
And it shall answer for me. Listen to it.

"In Love, if Love be Love, if Love
be ours,

Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal
powers :

Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

"It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

"The little rift within the lover's lute
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

"It is not worth the keeping : let it go :
But shall it ? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all."

O Master, do ye love my tender rhyme ?'

And Merlin look'd and half believed
her true,

So tender was her voice, so fair her face,
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her
tears

Like sunlight on the plain behind a
shower :

And yet he answer'd half indignantly :

'Far other was the song that once I
heard

By this huge oak, sung nearly where we sit:
For here we met, some ten or twelve of us,
To chase a creature that was current then
In these wild woods, the hart with golden
horns.

It was the time when first the question
rose

About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the
world.

And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited, one, the youngest
of us,

We could not keep him silent, out he
flash'd,

And into such a song, such fire for fame,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl
together,

And should have done it; but the beau-
teous beast

Scared by the noise upstarted at our feet,
And like a silver shadow slipt away
Thro' the dim land; and all day long we
rode

Thro' the dim land against a rushing wind,
That glorious roundel echoing in our ears,
And chased the flashes of his golden horns
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well
That laughs at iron—as our warriors did—
Where children cast their pins and nails,
and cry,

"Laugh, little well!" but touch it with
a sword,

It buzzes fiercely round the point; and
there

We lost him: such a noble song was that.
But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet
rhyme,

I felt as tho' you knew this cursed charm
Were proving it on me, and that I lay
And felt them slowly ebbing, name and
fame.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn-
fully:

'O mine have ebb'd away for evermore,
And all thro' following you to this wild
wood,

Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now, what hearts have men! they
never mount

As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn my
song,

Take one verse more—the lady speaks it
—this:

"My name, once mine, now thine, is
closelier mine,

For fame, could fame be mine, that fame
were thine,

And shame, could shame be thine, that
shame were mine.

So trust me not at all or all in all."

'Says she not well? and there is more
—this rhyme

Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the
Queen,

That burst in dancing, and the pearls
were split;

Some lost, some stolen, some as relics
kept.

But nevermore the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss each
other

On her white neck—so is it with this
rhyme:

It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differently;
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of
pearls:

"Man dreams of Fame while woman
wakes to love."

Yea! Love, tho' Love were of the gross-
est, carves

A portion from the solid present, eats
And uses, careless of the rest; but Fame,
The Fame that follows death is nothing to
us;

And what is Fame in life but half-disfame,
And counterchanged with darkness? ye
yourself

Know well that Envy calls you Devil's
son,

And since ye seem the Master of all Art,
They fain would make you Master of all
vice.'

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and
said,

'I once was looking for a magic weed,
And found a fair young squire who sat
alone,

Had carved himself a knightly shield of
wood,

And then was painting on it fancied arms,
Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun

In dexter chief; the scroll "I follow
fame."

And speaking not, but leaning over him,
I took his brush and blotted out the bird,
And made a Gardener putting in a graff,
With this for motto, "Rather use than
fame."

You should have seen him blush; but
afterwards

He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien, ,
For you, methinks you think you love me
well;

For me, I love you somewhat; rest: and
Love

Should have some rest and pleasure in
himself,

Not ever be too curious for a boon,

Too purient for a proof against the grain
Of him ye say ye love: but Fame with men,
Being but ampler means to serve man-
kind,

Should have small rest or pleasure in
herself,

But work as vassal to the larger love,
That dwarfs the petty love of one to one.
Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame
again

Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my
boon!

What other? for men sought to prove me
vile,

Because I fain had given them greater
wits:

And then did Envy call me Devil's son:
The sick weak beast seeking to help
herself

By striking at her better, miss'd, and
brought

Her own claw back, and wounded her
own heart.

Sweet were the days when I was all un-
known,

But when my name was lifted up, the
storm

Brake on the mountain and I cared not
for it.

Right well know I that Fame is half-
disfame,

Yet needs must work my work. That
other fame,

To one at least, who hath not children,
vague,

The cackle of the unborn about the grave,
I cared not for it: a single misty star,

Which is the second in a line of stars

That seem a sword beneath a belt of three,
I never gazed upon it but I dreamt

Of some vast charm concluded in that star
To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I

fear,

Giving you power upon me thro' this
charm,
That you might play me falsely, having
power,
However well ye think ye love me now
(As sons of kings loving in pupillage
Have turn'd to tyrants when they came
to power)
I rather dread the loss of use than fame :
If you—and not so much from wickedness,
As some will turn of anger, or a mood
Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,
To keep me all to your own self,—or else
A sudden sport of woman's jealousy,—
Should try this charm on whom ye say ye
love.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in
wrath :
'Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.
Good !
Well, hide it, hide it ; I shall find it out ;
And being found take heed of Vivien.
A woman and not trusted, doubtless I
Might feel some sudden turn of anger born
Of your misfaith ; and your fine epithet
Is accurate too, for this full love of mine
Without the full heart back may merit well
Your term of overstrain'd. So used as I,
My daily wonder is, I love at all.
And as to woman's jealousy, O why not ?
O to what end, except a jealous one,
And one to make me jealous if I love,
Was this fair charm invented by yourself ?
I well believe that all about this world
Ye cage a luxem captive here and there,
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower
From which is no escape for evermore.'

Then the great Master merrily answer'd
her :
'Full many a love in loving youth was
mine ;

I needed then a charm to love; them mine
But youth and love ; and that full heart
of yours
Whereof ye prattle, may now assure you
mine ;
So live uncharm'd. For those who
wrought it first,
The wrist is parted from the hand that
waved,
The feet unmortised from their ankle-
bones
Who paced it, ages back : but will ye hear
The legend as in guerdon for your rhyme ?

'There lived a king in the most Eastern
East,
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty name-
less isles ;
And passing one, at the high peep of
dawn,
He saw two cities in a thousand boats
All fighting for a woman on the sea.
And pushing his black craft among them
all,
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought
her off,
With loss of half his people arrow-slain ;
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful,
They said a light came from her when she
moved :
And since the pirate would not yield her
up,
The King impaled him for his piracy ;
Then made her Queen : but those isle-
nurtured eyes
Waged such unwilling tho' successful war
On all the youth, they sicken'd ; counsils
thinn'd,
And armies waned, for magnet-like she
drew

The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts ;
 And beasts themselves would worship ;
 camels knelt
 Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain
 back
 That carry kings in castles, bow'd black
 knees
 Of homage, ringing with their serpent
 hands,
 To make her smile, her golden ankle-bells.
 What wonder, being jealous, that he sent
 His horns of proclamation out thro' all
 The hundred under-kingdoms that he
 sway'd
 To find a wizard who might teach the King
 Some charm, which being wrought upon
 the Queen
 Might keep her all his own : to such a one
 He promised more than ever king has
 given,
 A league of mountain full of golden mines,
 A province with a hundred miles of coast,
 A palace and a princess, all for him :
 But on all those who tried and fail'd, the
 King
 Pronounced a dismal sentence, meaning
 by it
 To keep the list low and pretenders back,
 Or like a king, not to be trifled with—
 Their heads should moulder on the city
 gates.
 And many tried and fail'd, because the
 charm
 Of nature in her overbore their own :
 And many a wizard brow bleach'd on the
 walls :
 And many weeks a troop of carrion crows
 Hung like a cloud above the gateway
 towers.'

And Vivien breaking in upon him, said :
 ' I sit and gather honey ; yet, methinks,
 Thy tongue has tript a little : ask thyself.

The lady never made *unwilling* war
 With those fine eyes : she had her pleasure
 in it,
 And made her good man jealous with
 good cause.
 And lived there neither dame nor damsel
 then
 Wroth at a lover's loss ? were all as tame,
 I mean, as noble, as their Queen was fair ?
 Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,
 Or pinch a murderous dust into her drink,
 Or make her paler with a poison'd rose ?
 Well, those were not our days : but did
 they find
 A wizard ? Tell me, was he like to thee ?'

She ceased, and made her lithe arm
 round his neck
 Tighten, and then drew back, and let her
 eyes
 Speak for her, glowing on him, like a
 bride's
 On her new lord, her own, the first of men.

He answer'd laughing, ' Nay, not like
 to me.
 At last they found—his foragers for
 charms—
 A little glassy-headed hairless man,
 Who lived alone in a great wild on grass ;
 Read but one book, and ever reading
 grew
 So grated down and filed away with
 thought,
 So lean his eyes were monstrous ; while
 the skin
 Clung but to crate and basket, ribs and
 spine.
 And since he kept his mind on one sole
 aim,
 Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted
 flesh,
 Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall

That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting
men

Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,
And heard their voices talk behind the
wall,

And learnt their elemental secrets, powers
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye
Drew the vast cyclid of an inky cloud,
And lash'd it at the base with slanting
storm;

Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,
When the lake whiten'd and the pine-wood
mar'd,

And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow,
sunn'd

The world to peace again : here was the
man.

And so by force they dragg'd him to the
King.

And then he taught the King to charm
the Queen

In such-wise, that no man could see her
more,

Nor saw she save the King, who wrought
the charm,

Coming and going, and she lay as dead,
And lost all use of life : but when the King
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,
The province with a hundred miles of coast,
The palace and the princess, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on
grass.

And vanish'd, and his book came down
to me.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily :
'Ye have the book : the charm is written
in it :

Good : take my counsel : let me know it
at once :

For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd
thirty-fold,

And whelm all this beneath as vast a
mound

As after furious battle o'er the plain
On some wild down above the windy deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden messenger
To dig, pick, open, find and read the
charm :

Then, if I tried it, who should blame me
then?'

And smiling as a master smiles at one
That is not of his school, nor any scholar
But that where blind and naked Ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,
On all things all day long, he answer'd her :

'Thou read the book, my pretty Vivien !
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample marge,
And every marge enclosing in the middle
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas :
And every square of text an awful charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone long.
So long, that mountains have arisen since
With cities on their flanks—thou read the
book !

And every margin scribbled, crost, and
cramm'd

With comment, densest condensation, hard
To read and eye : but the long sleepless
nights

Of my long life have made it easy to me.
And none can read the text, not even I ;
And none can read the comment but
myself ;

And in the comment did I find the charm.
O, the results are simple ; a mere child
Might see it in the form of anyone,

And never could undo it : ask no more
For tho' you should not prove it upon me,
But keep that oath ye sware, ye might,
perchance,

Assay it on some one of the Table Round,
And all because ye dream they babble of
you.'

And Vivien, frowning in true anger,
said :

'What dare the full-fed liars say of me?
They ride abroad redressing human
wrongs !

They sit with knife in meat and wine in
horn !

They bound to holy vows of chastity !

Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.

But you are man, you well can understand
The shame that cannot be explain'd for
shame.

Not one of all the drove should touch me :
swine !'

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her
words :

'You breathe but accusation vast and
vague,

Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If
ye know,

Set up the charge ye know, to stand or fall !'

And Vivien answer'd frowning wrath-
fully :

'O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er his
wife

And two fair babes, and went to distant
lands ;

Was one year gone, and on returning
found

Not two but three ? there lay the reckling,
one

But one hour old ! What said the happy
sire ?

A seven-months' babe had been a truer gift.
Those twelve sweet moons confused his
fatherhood.'

Then answer'd Merlin, 'Nay, I know
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland
dame :

Some cause had kept him sunder'd from
his wife :

One child they had : it lived with her :
she died :

His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valence to bring home
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore : take
the truth.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'overtrue a tale.

What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagamore,
That ardent man? "to pluck the flower
in season,"

So says the song, "I trow it is no treason."

O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the
hour?'

And Merlin answer'd, 'Overquick art
thou

To catch a loathly plume fall'n from the
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole
prey

Is man's good name : he never wrong'd
his bride.

I know the tale. An angry gust of wind
Puff'd out his torch among the myriad-
room'd

And many-corridor'd complexities
Of Arthur's palace : then he found a door,
And darkling felt the sculptured ornament
That wreathen round it made it seem his
own ;

And wearied out made for the couch and
slept,

A stainless man beside a stainless maid ;
And either slept, nor knew of other there ;

Till the high dawn piercing the royal rose
In Arthur's casement glimmer'd chastely
down,

Flushing upon them blushing, and at once
He rose without a word and parted from
her :

But when the thing was blazed about the
court,

The brute world howling forced them into
loudly,

And as it chanced they are happy, being
pure.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'that were likely
too.

What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale
And of the horrid foulness that he wrought,
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of
Christ,

Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.
What, in the precincts of the chapel-yard,
Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
And by the cold Hic Jacets of the dead !'

And Merlin answer'd careless of her
charge,

'A sober man is Percivale and pure ;
But once in life was fluster'd with new
wine,

Then paced for coolness in the chapel-
yard ;

Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught
And meant to stamp him with her master's
mark ;

And that he sinn'd is not believable ;
For, look upon his face !—but if he sinn'd,
The sin that practice burns into the blood,
And not the one dark hour which brings
remorse,

Will brand us, after, of whose fold we be :
Or else were he, the holy king, whose
hymns

Are chanted in the minster, worse than all.

But is your spleen forth'd out, or have ye
more ?'

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet in
wrath :

'O ay ; what say ye to Sir Lancelot, friend ?
Traitor or true? that commerce with the
Queen,

I ask you, is it clamour'd by the child,
Or whisper'd in the corner? do ye know
it?'

To which he answer'd sadly, 'Yea, I
know it.

Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
To fetch her, and she watch'd him from
her walls.

A rumour runs, she took him for the King,
So fixt her fancy on him : let them be.
But have ye no one word of loyal praise
For Arthur, blameless King and stainless
man?'

She answer'd with a low and chucklin
laugh :

'Man! is he man at all, who knows and
winks?

Sees what his fair bride is and does, and
winks?

By which the good King means to blind
himself,

And blinds himself and all the Table Round
To all the foulness that they work. Myself
Could call him (were it not for womanhood)
The pretty, popular name such manhood
earns,

Could call him the main cause of all their
crime ;

Yea, were he not crown'd King, coward,
and fool.'

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing,
said

'O true and tender! O my liege and
King!

O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eye-witness
fain

Have all men true and leal, all women
pure;

How, in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible

To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poach'd filth that floods the middle
street,

Is thy white blamelessness accounted
blame!

But Vivien, deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommenced, and let her
tongue

Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left

Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad
clean.

Her words had issue other than she
will'd,

He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And mutter'd in himself, 'Tell *her* the
charm!

So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare the next, and if she have it not,
So will she rail. What did the wanton say?
"Not mount as high;" we scarce can sink
as low:

For men at most differ as Heaven and earth,
But women, worst and best, as Heaven
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends of
old;

All brave, and many generous, and some
chaste.

She cloaks the scar of some repulse with
lies;

I well believe she tempted them and fail'd,
Being so bitter: for fine plots may fail,
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well as face
With colours of the heart that are not theirs.

I will not let her know: nine tithes of
times

Face-flatterer and backbiter are the same.
And they, sweet soul, that most impute a
crime

Are pronest to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental range; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all;
Yea, they would pare the mountain to the
plain,

To leave an equal baseness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so
small,

Inflate themselves with some insane
delight,

And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and see
Her godlike head crown'd with spiritual
fire,

And touching other worlds. I am weary
of her.'

He spoke in words part heard, in
whispers part,

Half-suffocated in the hoary fell
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his
mood,

And hearing 'harlot' mutter'd twice or
thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and
stood

Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,

Flash'd the bare-glimming skeleton of
death!

White was her cheek; sharp breaths of
anger puff'd

Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-
clench'd

Went faltering sideways downward to her
belt,

And feeling; had she found a dagger there
(For in a wink the false love turns to
hate)

She would have stabb'd him; but she
found it not:

His eye was calm, and suddenly she took
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.

Then her false voice made way, broken
with sobs:

'O crueler than was ever told in tale,
Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd love!
O cruel, there was nothing wild or strange,
Or seeming shameful—for what shame in
love,

So love be true, and not as yours is—
nothing

Poor Vivien had not done to win his trust
Who call'd her what he call'd her—all
her crime,

All—all—the wish to prove him wholly
hers.'

She mused a little, and then clapt her
hands

Together with a wailing shriek, and said:
'Stabb'd through the heart's affections to
the heart!

Suethed like the kid in its own mother's
milk!

Kill'd with a word worse than a life of
blows!

I thought that he was gentle, being great:
O God, that I had loved a smaller man!

I should have found in him a greater
heart.

O, I, that dancering my true passion, saw
The knights, the court, the King, dark
in your light,

Who loved to make you darker than they
are,

Because of that high pleasure which I
had

To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship—I am answer'd, and hence-
forth

The course of life that seem'd so flowery
to me

With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken
short,

And ending in a ruin—nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and
there,

If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,
Kill'd with inutterable unkindness.'

She paused, she turn'd away, she hung
her head,

The snake of gold slid from her hair, the
braid

Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker toward
the storm

In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed her
true:

Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
'Come from the storm,' and having no
reply,

Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the
face

Hand-bidden, as far as most grief or
shame;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-touching
terms,

To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in
vain.

At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,
And as the cageling newly flown returns,
The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing
Came to her old perch back, and settled
there.

There while she sat, half-falling from his
knees,

Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw
The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid
yet,

About her, more in kindness than in love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.
But she dislink'd herself at once and rose,
Her arms upon her breast across, and
stood,

A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,
Upright and flush'd before him : then she
said :

‘ There must be now no passages of love
Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore;
Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,
What should be granted which your own
gross heart
Would reckon worth the taking? I will
go.

In truth, but one thing now—better have
died

Thrice than have ask'd it once—could
make me stay—

That proof of trust—so often ask'd in
vain !

How justly, after that vile term of yours,
I find with grief ! I might believe you
then,

Who knows ? once more. Lo ! what was
once to me

Mere matter of the fancy, now hath grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.

Farewell ; think gently of me, for I fear
My fate or folly, passing gayer youth

For one so old, must be to love thee still.
But ere I leave thee let me swear once
more

That if I schemed against thy peace in
this,

May yon just heaven, that darkens o'er
me, send

One flash, that, missing all things else,
may make

My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie.’

Scarce had she ceased, when out of
heaven a bolt

(For now the storm was close above them)
struck,

Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
With darted spikes and splinters of the
wood

The dark earth round. He raised his
eyes and saw

The tree that shone white-listed thro' the
gloom.

But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her
oath,

And dazzled by the livid-flickering fork,
And deafen'd with the stammering cracks
and claps

That follow'd, flying back and crying out,
‘ O Merlin, tho' you do not love me, save,
Yet save me ! ’ clung to him and hugg'd
him close ;

And call'd him dear protector in her
fright,

Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
But wrought upon his mood and hugg'd
him close.

The pale blood of the wizard at her touch
Took gayer colours, like an opal warm'd.
She blamed herself for telling hearsay
tales :

She shook from fear, and for her fault she
wept

Of petulancy ; she call'd him lord and liege,

Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
 Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate
 love
 Of her whole life ; and ever overhead
 Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten
 branch
 Snapt in the rushing of the river-rain
 Above them ; and in change of glare and
 gloom
 Her eyes and neck glittering went and
 came ;
 Till now the storm, its burst of passion
 spent,
 Meaning and calling out of other lands,
 Had left the ravaged woodland yet once
 more
 To peace ; and what should not have been
 had been,
 For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,
 Had yielded, told her all the charm, and
 slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth
 the charm
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,
 And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
 And lost to life and use and name and
 fame.

Then crying ' I have made his glory
 mine,'
 And shrieking out ' O fool ! ' the harlot
 leapt
 Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
 Behind her, and the forest echo'd ' fool.'

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the loveable,
 Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
 High in her chamber up a tower to the
 east
 Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot ;

Which first she plac'd where morning's
 earliest ray
 Might strike it, and awake her with the
 gleam ;
 Then fearing rust or soilage fashion'd for it
 A case of silk, and braided thereupon
 All the devices blazon'd on the shield
 In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
 A border fantasy of branch and flower,
 And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
 Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
 Leaving her household and good father,
 climb'd
 That eastern tower, and entering barr'd
 her door,
 Stript off the case, and read the naked
 shield,
 Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his
 arms,
 Now made a pretty history to herself
 Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
 And every scratch a lance had made
 upon it,
 Conjecturing when and where : this cut
 is fresh ;
 That ten years back : this dealt him at
 Caerlyle ;
 That at Caerleon ; this at Camelot :
 And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was
 there !
 And here a thrust that might have kill'd,
 but God
 Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his
 enemy down,
 And saved him : so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good
 shield
 Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his
 name ?
 He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
 For the great diamond in the diamond
 jousts,

Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by that
name
Had named them, since a diamond was
the prize.

For Arthur, long before they crown'd
him King,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black
tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
Like its own mists to all the mountain
side :
For here two brothers, one a king, had
met
And fought together ; but their names
were lost ;
And each had slain his brother at a blow ;
And down they fell and made the glen
abhor'd :
And there they lay till all their bones
were bleach'd,
And lichen'd into colour with the crags :
And he, that once was king, had on a
crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside.
And Arthur came, and labouring up the
pass,
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and
the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the skull
the crown
Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn :
And down the shingly scaur he plunged,
and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, ' Lo, thou likewise shalt
be King.'

Thereafter, when a King, he had the
gems

Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them
to his knights,
Saying, ' These jewels, whereupon I
chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the
King's—
For public use : henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these :
For so by nine years' proof we needs
must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves
shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
The heathen, who, some say, shall rule
the land
Hereafter, which God hinder.' Thus he
spoke :
And eight years past, eight jousts had
been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the
year,
With purpose to present them to the
Queen,
When all were won ; but meaning all at
once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never spoken
word.
Now for the central diamond and the
last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his
court
Hard on the river nigh the place which
now
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust
At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
Spake (for she had been sick) to
Guinevere,
' Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot
move
To these fair jousts ?' ' Yea, lord,' she
said, ' ye know it.'

'Then will ye miss,' he answer'd, 'the
 great deeds
 Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
 A sight ye love to look on.' And the
 Queen
 Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
 On Lancelot, where he stood beside the
 King.
 He thinking that he read her meaning
 there,
 'Stay with me, I am sick; my love is
 more
 Than many diamonds,' yielded; and a
 heart
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
 (However much he yearn'd to make
 complete
 The tale of diamonds for his destined
 boon)
 Urged him to speak against the truth,
 and say,
 'Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly
 whole,
 And lets me from the saddle;' and the
 King
 Glanced first at him, then her, and went
 his way.
 No sooner gone than suddenly she began:
 'To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot,
 much to blame!
 Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the
 knights
 Are half of them our enemies, and the
 crowd
 Will murmur, "Lo the shameless ones,
 who take
 Their pastime now the trustful King is
 gone!"'
 Then Lancelot vexed at having lied in vain:
 'Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,
 My Queen, that summer, when ye loved
 me first.

Then of the crowd ye took no more
 account
 Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
 When its own voice clings to each blade
 of grass,
 And every voice is nothing. As to
 knights,
 Them surely can I silence with all ease.
 But now my loyal worship is allow'd
 Of all men: many a hard, without
 offence,
 Has link'd our names together in his lay,
 Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guine-
 vere,
 The pearl of beauty: and our knights at
 feast
 Have pledged us in this union, while the
 King
 Would listen smiling. How then? is
 there more?
 Has Arthur spoken aught? or would
 yourself,
 Now weary of my service and devoir,
 Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?

She broke into a little scornful laugh:
 'Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless
 King,
 That passionate perfection, my good
 lord—
 But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
 He never spoke word of reproach to me,
 He never had a glimpse of mine unrath.
 He cares not for me: only here to-day
 There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his
 eyes:
 Some meddling regent has tamper'd with
 him—else
 Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
 And swearing men to vows impossible,
 To make them like himself: but, friend,
 to me
 He is all fault who hath no fault at all:

For who loves me must have a touch of
 earth ;
 The low sun makes the colour : I am yours,
 Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by the
 bond.
 And therefore hear my words : go to the
 jousts :
 The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our
 dream
 Whensweetest ; and the vermin voices here
 May buzz so loud—we scorn them, but
 they sting.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of
 knights :
 ' And with what face, after my pretext
 made,
 Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I
 Before a King who honours his own word,
 As if it were his God's ?'

' Yea,' said the Queen,
 ' A moral child without the craft to rule,
 Else had he not lost me : but listen to me,
 If I must find you wit : we hear it said
 That men go down before your spear at
 a touch,
 But knowing you are Lancelot ; your great
 name,
 This conquers : hide it therefore ; go
 unknown :
 Win ! by this kiss you will : and our true
 King
 Will then allow your pretext, O my
 knight,
 As all for glory ; for to speak him true,
 Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he
 seem,
 No keener hunter after glory breathes.
 He loves it in his knights more than
 himself :
 They prove to him his work : win and
 return.'

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
 Wroth at himself. Not willing to be
 known,
 He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,
 Chose the green path that show'd the rarer
 foot,
 And there among the solitary downs,
 Full often lost in fancy, lost his way ;
 Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,
 That all in loops and links among the
 dales
 Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
 Fired from the west, far on a hill, the
 towers.
 Thither he made, and blew the gateway
 horn.
 Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled
 man,
 Who let him into lodging and disarm'd.
 And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless
 man ;
 And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
 With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir
 Lavaine,
 Moving to meet him in the castle court ;
 And close behind them stept the lily maid
 Elaine, his daughter : mother of the house
 There was not : some light jest among
 them rose
 With laughter dying down as the great
 knight
 Approach'd them : then the Lord of
 Astolat :
 ' Whence comest thou, my guest, and by
 what name
 Livest between the lips ? for by thy state
 And presence I might guess thee chief of
 those,
 After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls.
 Him have I seen : the rest, his Table
 Round,
 Known as they are, to me they are
 unknown.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights :
 ' Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,
 What I by mere mischance have brought,
 my shield.
 But since I go to joust as one unknown
 At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
 Hereafter ye shall know me—and the shield—
 I pray you lend me some, if such you have,
 Blank, or at least with some device not mine.'

Then said the Lord of Astolat, ' Here is Torre's :
 Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre.
 And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
 His ye can have.' Then added plain Sir Torre,
 ' Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it.'
 Here laugh'd the father saying, ' Fie, Sir Churl,
 Is that an answer for a noble knight ?
 Allow him ! but Lavaine, my younger here,
 He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
 Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,
 And see it in this damsel's golden hair,
 To make her thrice as wilful as before.'

' Nay, father, nay good father, shame me not
 Before this noble knight,' said young Lavaine,
 ' For nothing. Surely I but play'd on Torre :
 He seem'd so sullen, vext he could not go :
 A jest, no more ! for, knight, the maiden deam't

That some one put this diamond in her hand,
 And that it was too slippery to be held,
 And slipt and fell into some pool or stream,
 The castle-well, belike ; and then I said
 That if I went and if I fought and won it
 (But all was jest and joke among ourselves)
 Then must she keep it safelier. All was jest.
 But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
 To ride to Camelot with this noble knight :
 Win shall I not, but do my best to win :
 Young as I am, yet would I do my best.'

' So ye will grace me,' answer'd Lancelot,
 Smiling a moment, ' with your fellowship
 O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,
 Then were I glad of you as guide and friend :
 And you shall win this diamond—as I hear,
 It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may,
 And yield it to this maiden, if ye will.'
 ' A fair large diamond,' added plain Sir Torre,
 ' Such be for queens, and not for simple maids.'
 Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
 Elaine, and heard her name as best she could,
 Flush'd slightly at the slight disparagement
 Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
 Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd :
 ' If what is fair be but for what is fair,
 And only queens are to be counted so,
 Rash were my judgment them who deem
 this maid
 Might want as fair a jewel as is on earth,
 Not violating the bond of life to life.'

He look'd and comm'd the lily maid Elaine,

Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the
Queen,

In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere
his time.

Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the
world,

Had been the sleeker for it : but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest
man

That ever among ladies ate in hall,
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
However marr'd, of more than twice her
years,

Scam'd with an ancient swordcut on the
cheek,

And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up
her eyes

And loved him, with that love which was
her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of
the court,

Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
Stept with all grace, and not with half
disdain

Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
But kindly man moving among his kind :
Whom they with meats and vintage of
their best

And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.
And much they ask'd of court and Table
Round,

And ever well and readily answer'd he :
But Lancelot, when they glanced at
Guinevere,

Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,

Heard from the Baron that, ten years
before,

The heathen caught and reft him of his
tongue.

' He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce
design

Against my house, and him they caught
and maim'd ;

But I, my sons, and little daughter fled
From bonds or death, and dwelt among
the woods

By the great river in a boatman's hut.
Dull days were those, till our good Arthur
broke

The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill.'

' O there, great lord, doubtless,' Lavaine
said, rapt

By all the sweet and sudden passion of
youth

Toward greatness in its elder, ' you have
fought.

O tell us—for we live apart—you know
Of Arthur's glorious wars.' And Lancelot
spoke

And answer'd him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent
Glem ;

And in the four loud battles by the shore
Of Douglas ; that on Bassa ; then the war
That thunder'd in and out the gloomy
skirts

Of Celidon the forest ; and again
By castle Gurnion, where the glorious
King

Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald center'd in a sun
Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he
breathed ;

And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild
white Horse

Set every gilded parapet shuddering :
 And up in Aguel-Cathregion too,
 And down the waste sand-shores of Trath
 Treroit,

Where many a heathen fell : and on the
 mount

Of Balon I myself beheld the King
 Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
 And all his legions crying Christ and him,
 And break them ; and I saw him, after,
 stand

High on a heap of slain, from spur to
 plume

Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
 And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
 " They are broken, they are broken ! "
 for the King,

However mild he seems at home, nor
 cares

For triumph in our mimic wars, the
 jousts —

For if his own knight cast him down, he
 laughs

Saying, his knights are better men than
 he —

Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
 Fells him : I never saw his like : there lives
 No greater leader.

While he utter'd this,
 Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
 ' Save your great self, fair lord ; ' and
 when he fell

From talk of war to traits of pleasantry —
 Being mirthful he, but in a stately kind —
 She still took note that when the living
 smile

Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro
 The lily maid had striven to make him
 cheer.

There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness

Of manners and of nature : and she
 thought

That all was nature, all, perchance, for
 her.

And all night long his face before her lived,
 As when a painter, poring on a face,

Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
 Behind it, and sorrounds him that his face,
 The shape and colour of a mind and life,
 Lives for his children, ever at its best

And fullest ; so the face before her lived,
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence,
 full

Of noble things, and held her from her
 sleep.

Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the
 thought

She needs must bid farewell to sweet
 Lavaine.

First as in fear, step after step, she stole
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating :

Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the
 court,

' This shield, my friend, where is it ? '
 and Lavaine

Fast inward, as she came from out the
 tower.

There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd,
 and smooth'd

The glossy shoulder, humming to himself
 Half-envious of the flattering hand, she

drew
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more
 amazed

Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
 The maiden standing in the dewy light.

He had not dream'd she was so beautiful.
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear.

For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
 Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.

Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,
 That he should wear her favour at the tilt.

She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.

'Fair lord, whose name I know not—
 noble it is,
 I well believe, the noblest—will you wear
 My favour at this tourney?' 'Nay,' said
 he,
 'Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
 Favour of any lady in the lists.
 Such is my wont, as those, who know me,
 know.'
 'Yea, so,' she answer'd; 'then in wearing
 mine
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,
 That those who know should know you.'
 And he turn'd
 Her counsel up and down within his mind,
 And found it true, and answer'd, 'True,
 my child.
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
 What is it?' and she told him 'A red
 sleeve
 Broider'd with pearls,' and brought it:
 then he bound
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile
 Saying, 'I never yet have done so much
 For any maiden living,' and the blood
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with
 delight;
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
 Returning brought the yet-unbrazon'd
 shield,
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:
 'Do me this grace, my child, to have my
 shield
 In keeping till I come.' 'A grace to me,'
 She answer'd, 'twice to-day. I am your
 squire!'
 Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, 'Lily
 maid,
 For fear our people call you lily maid
 In earnest, let me bring your colour back;
 Once, twice, and thrice: now get you
 hence to bed:—'

So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own
 hand,
 And thus they moved away: she stay'd a
 minute,
 Then made a sudden step to the gate,
 and there—
 Her bright hair blown about the serious
 face
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—
 Paused by the gateway, standing near the
 shield
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms
 far-off
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the down:
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took
 the shield,
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions pass'd
 away
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushes
 down,
 To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived
 a knight
 Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
 A hermit, who had pray'd, labour'd and
 pray'd,
 And ever labouring had scoop'd himself
 In the white rock a chapel and a hall
 On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,
 And cells and chambers: all were fair
 and dry;
 The green light from the meadows under-
 neath
 Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;
 And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees
 And poplars made a noise of falling
 showers.
 And thither wending there that night they
 bode.

But when the next day broke from un-
 derground,

And shot red fire and shadows thro' the
cave,

They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and
rode away :

Then Lancelot saying, 'Hear, but hold
my name

Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the
Lake.'

Alas! if Lavaine, whose instant rever-
ence,

Dearer to true young hearts than their
own praise,

But left him leave to stammer, 'Is it
indeed?'

And after muttering 'The great Lancelot,'
At last he got his breath and answer'd,

'One,
One have I seen—that other, our liege
lord,

The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of
kings,

of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there—then were I stricken
blind

That minute, I might say that I had seen.'

So spake Lavaine, and when they
reach'd the lists

By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Run thro' the peopled gallery which half
round

Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass.
Until they found the clear-faced King,
who sat

Robed in red samite, easily to be known,
Swoon to his crown the golden dragon
clung,

And down his robe the dragon writhed
in gold,

And from the carven-work behind him
crept

Two dragons gilded, sloping down to
make

Arms for his chair, while all the rest of
them

Thro' knots and loops and folds innu-
merable

Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they
found

The new design wherein they lost them-
selves,

Yet with all ease, so tender was the work:
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,

Blazed the last diamond of the nameless
king.

Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine
and said,

'Me you call great: none is the truer
sent,

The truer lance: but there is many a youth
Now crescent, who will come to all I am

And overcome it; and in me there dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off touch

Of greatness as know well I am not great:
There is the man.' And Lavaine gaped
upon him

As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew; and then did either
side,

They that would, and they that hold the
lists.

So lance in rest, stroke just, suddenly
move,

Met in the midst, and there so fitly
shook, that a man far-off might well
perceive,

If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder
of arms.

And Lancelot had a little till he saw
Which were the weaker; then he hur'd
into it

Against the stronger: little need to speak
Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke,
earl,

Count, baron—whom he smote, he over-
threw.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith
and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held
the lists,
Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger
knight
Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other,
' Lo !
What is he ? I do not mean the force
alone —
The grace and versatility of the man !
Is it not Lancelot ? ' ' When has Lance-
lot worn
Favour of any lady in the lists ?
Not such his wont, as we, that know him,
know.'
' How then ? who then ? ' a fury seized
them all,
A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They couch'd their spears and prick'd their
steeds, and thus,
Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind
they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit,
bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the
skies,
Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
And him that helms it, so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a
spear
Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and the
head
Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt,
and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and wor-
shipfully ;
He bore a knight of old repute to the
earth,
And brought his horse to Lancelot where
he lay.
He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet
endure,
And being lustily holpen by the rest,
His party,—tho' it seem'd half-miracle
To those he fought with,—drave his kith
and kin,
And all the Table Round that held the
lists,
Back to the barrier ; then the trumpets
blew
Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the
sleeve
Of scarlet, and the pearls ; and all the
knights,
His party, cried ' Advance and take thy
prize
The diamond ; ' but he answer'd, ' Diamond
me
No diamonds ! for God's love, a little air !
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death !
Hence will I, and I charge you, follow me
not.'

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly from
the field
With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and
sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, ' Draw the lance-
head : '
' Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot, ' said
Lavaine,
' I dread me, if I draw it, you will die.'
But he, ' I die already with it : draw—
Draw, '—and Lavaine drew, and Sir
Lancelot gave

A marvellous great shriek and ghastly
groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and down
he sank
For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd
away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him
in,
There stanch'd his wound ; and there, in
doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a week
Hid from the wide world's rumour by the
grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling
showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled the
lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and
West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate
isles,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying
to him,
'Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we
won the day,
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left
his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is death.'
'Heaven hinder,' said the King, 'that
such an one,
Suggest a knight as we have seen to-day—
He seem'd to me another Lancelot—
Yes, twenty times I thought him Lance-
lot—
He must not pass uncared for. Where-
fore, rise,
O Gawain, and ride forth and find the
knight.
Wounded and wearied needs must he be
suar.
I charge you that you get at once to horse.

And, knights and kings, there I watch-
not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours as readily
given :
His prowess was too wondrous. We will
do him
No customary honour : since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Rise and take
This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us where he is, and how he
fares,
And cease not from your quest until ye
find.'

So saying, from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took,
And gave, the diamond : then from where
he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a
Prince
In the mid night and flourish of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair
and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and
Garsint
And Garsith, a good knight, but slow-
withal
Sir Modred's brother, and the child of
Lot,
Not often loyal to his word, and now
Wroth that the King's command to rally
forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him
leave
The banquet and assembly of knight-
and kings.
So all to wrath he got to home and
went ;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in
mood,

Past, thinking 'Is it Lancelot who hath
 come
 Despite the wound he spake of, all for
 gain
 Of glory, and hath added wound to wound,
 And ridd'n away to die?' So fear'd the
 King,
 And, after two days' tarrance there,
 return'd.
 Then when he saw the Queen, embrac-
 ing ask'd,
 'Love, are you yet so sick?' 'Nay,
 lord,' she said.
 'And where is Lancelot?' Then the
 Queen amazed,
 'Was he not with you? won he not your
 prize?'
 Nay, but one like him.' 'Why that like
 was he.'
 And when the King demanded how she
 knew,
 Said, 'Lord, no sooner had ye parted
 from us,
 Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
 That men went down before his spear at
 a touch,
 But knowing he was Lancelot; his great
 name
 Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide
 his name
 From all men, ev'n the King, and to this
 end
 Had made the pretext of a hindering
 wound,
 That he might joust unknown of all, and
 learn
 If his old prowess were in aught decay'd;
 And added, "Our true Arthur, when he
 learns,
 Will well allow my pretext, as for gain
 Of purer glory."'

Then replied the King :

'Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
 In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
 To have trusted me as he hath trusted
 thee.
 Surely his King and most familiar friend
 Might well have kept his secret. True,
 indeed,
 Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
 So fine a fear in our large Lancelot
 Must needs have moved my laughter :
 now remains
 But little cause for laughter : his own
 kin—
 Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him,
 this !—
 His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon
 him ;
 So that he went sore wounded from the
 field :
 Yet good news too : for goodly hopes are
 mine
 That Lancelot is no more a lonely hear.
 He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
 A sleeve of scarlet, broider'd with great
 pearls,
 Some gentle maiden's gift.'

'Yea, lord,' she said,
 'Thy hopes are mine,' and saying that,
 she choked,
 And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,
 Past to her chamber, and there flung
 herself
 Down on the great King's couch, and
 writhed upon it,
 And clench'd her fingers till they bit the
 palm,
 And shriek'd out 'Traitor' to the un-
 hearing wall,
 Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose
 again,
 And moved about her palace, proud and
 pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region
 round
 Rode with his diamond, wearied of the
 quest,
 Touch'd at all points, except the poplar
 grove,
 And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat :
 Whom glittering in enamell'd arms the
 maid
 Glanced at, and cried, 'What news from
 Camelot, lord ?
 What of the knight with the red sleeve ?'
 'He won.'
 'I knew it,' she said. 'But parted from
 the jousts
 Hurt in the side,' whereat she caught her
 breath ;
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp
 lance go ;
 Thereon she smote her hand : wellnigh
 she swoon'd :
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at her,
 came
 The Lord of Astolat out, to whom the
 Prince
 Reported who he was, and on what quest
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could not
 find
 The victor, but had ridd'n a random
 round
 To seek him, and had wearied of the
 search.
 To whom the Lord of Astolat, 'Bide with
 us,
 And ride no more at random, noble
 Prince !
 Here was the knight, and here he left a
 shield ;
 This will he send or come for : furthermore
 Our son is with him ; we shall hear anon,
 Needs must we hear.' To this the cour-
 teous Prince
 Accorded with his wonted courtesy,

Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
 And stay'd ; and cast his eyes on fair
 Elaine :
 Where could be found face daintier ? then
 her shape
 From forehead down to foot, perfect—
 again
 From foot to forehead exquisitely turn'd :
 'Well—if I bide, lo ! this wild flower for
 me !'
 And oft they met among the garden yews,
 And there he set himself to play upon her
 With sallying wit, free flashes from a
 height
 Above her, graces of the court, and songs,
 Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden elo-
 quence
 And amorous adulation, till the maid
 Rebell'd against it, saying to him, 'Prince,
 O loyal nephew of our noble King,
 Why ask you not to see the shield he left,
 Whence you might learn his name ? Why
 slight your King,
 And lose the quest he sent you on, and
 prove
 No surer than our falcon yesterday,
 Who lost the hern we slipt him at, and
 went
 To all the winds ?' 'Nay, by mine
 head,' said he,
 'I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
 O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes ;
 But an ye will it let me see the shield.'
 And when the shield was brought, and
 Gawain saw
 Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd with
 gold,
 Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,
 and mock'd :
 'Right was the King ! our Lancelot !
 that true man !'
 'And right was I,' she answer'd merrily,
 'I,

Who dream'd my knight the greatest
knight of all.'
'And if I dream'd,' said Gawain, 'that
you love
This greatest knight, your pardon! lo,
ye know it!
Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in
vain?'
Full simple was her answer, 'What know
I?
My brethren have been all my fellowship;
And I, when often they have talk'd of love,
Wish'd it had been my mother, for they
talk'd,
Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so
myself—
I know not if I know what true love is,
But if I know, then, if I love not him,
I know there is none other I can love.'
'Yea, by God's death,' said he, 'ye love
him well,
But would not, knew ye what all others
know,
And whom he loves.' 'So be it,' cried
Elaine,
And lifted her fair face and moved away:
But he pursued her, calling, 'Stay a little!
One golden minute's grace! he wore your
sleeve:
Would he break faith with one I may not
name?
Must our true man change like a leaf at
last?
Nay—like enow: why then, far be it from
me
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
And, damsel, for I deem you know full
well
Where your great knight is hidden, let me
leave
My quest with you; the diamond also:
here!
For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;

And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
From your own hand; and whether he
love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
A thousand times!—a thousand times
farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
May meet at court hereafter: there, I
think,
So ye will learn the courtesies of the court,
We two shall know each other.'

Then he gave,
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which he
gave,
The diamond, and all wearied of the quest
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he
went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there told
the King
What the King knew, 'Sir Lancelot is the
knight.'
And added, 'Sire, my liege, so much I
learnt;
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him;
and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;
For by mine head she knows his hiding-
place.'

The seldom-frowning King frown'd, and
replied,
'Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings.'

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all
in awe,

For twenty strokes of the blood, without
 a word,
 Linger'd that other, staring after him ;
 Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd
 abroad
 About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
 All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues
 were loosed :
 'The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
 Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat.'
 Some read the King's fate, some the
 Queen's, and all
 Had marvel what the maid might be, but
 most
 Pream'd her as unworthy. One old
 dame
 Came suddenly on the Queen with the
 sharp news.
 She, that had heard the noise of it
 before,
 But sorrowing Lancelot should have
 stoop'd so low,
 Marr'd her friend's aim with pale tran-
 quillity.
 So ran the tale like fire about the court,
 Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder
 flared :
 Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or
 thrice
 Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the
 Queen,
 And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
 Smiled at each other, while the Queen,
 who sat
 With lips severely placid, felt the knot
 Climb in her throat, and with her feet
 unseen
 Crush'd the wild passion out against the
 floor
 Beneath the banquet, where the meats
 became
 As wormwood, and she hated all who
 pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
 Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
 The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her
 heart,
 Crept to her father, while he mused alone,
 Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and
 said,
 'Father, you call me wilful, and the fault
 Is yours who let me have my will, and
 now,
 Sweet father, will you let me lose my
 wits ?'
 'Nay,' said he, 'surely.' 'Wherefore, let
 me hence.'
 She answer'd, 'and find out our dear
 Lavaine.'
 'Ye will not lose your wits for dear
 Lavaine :
 Bide,' answer'd he : 'we needs must hear
 anon
 Of him, and of that other.' 'Ay,' she
 said,
 'And of that other, for I needs must hence
 And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
 And with mine own hand give his diamond
 to him,
 Lest I be found as faithless in the quest
 As yon proud Prince who left the quest
 to me.
 Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams
 Gnant as it were the skeleton of himself,
 Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's
 aid.
 The gentler-born the maiden, the more
 bound,
 My father, to be sweet and serviceable
 To noble knights in tokens, as ye know
 When these have worn their tokens : let
 me hence
 I pray you.' Then her father nodding
 said,
 'Ay, ay, the diamond : wit ye well, my
 child.

Right fain were I to learn this knight
 were whole,
 Being our greatest : yea, and you must
 give it—
 And sure I think this fruit is hung too high
 For any mouth to gape for save a
 queen's—
 Nay, I mean nothing : so then, get you
 gone,
 Being so very wilful you must go.'

Lightly, hersuit allow'd, she slipt away,
 And while she made her ready for her ride,
 Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear,
 'Being so very wilful you must go,'
 And changed itself and echo'd in her heart,
 'Being so very wilful you must die.'
 But she was happy enough and shook it off,
 As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us ;
 And in her heart she answer'd it and said,
 'What matter, so I help him back to life ?'
 Then far away with good Sir Torre for
 guide
 Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless
 downs
 To Camelot, and before the city-gates
 Came on her brother with a happy face
 Making a roan horse caper and curvet
 For pleasure all about a field of flowers :
 Whom when she saw, 'Lavaine,' she
 cried, 'Lavaine,
 How fares my lord Sir Lancelot ?' He
 amazed,
 'Torre and Elaine ! why here ? Sir
 Lancelot !
 How know ye my lord's name is Lance-
 lot ?'
 But when the maid had told him all her
 tale,
 Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his
 moods
 Left them, and under the strange-statued
 gate,

Where Arthur's wars were render'd
 mystically,
 Past up the still rich city to his kin,
 His own far blood, which dwelt at
 Camelot ;
 And her, Lavaine across the poplar grove
 Led to the caves : there first she saw the
 casque
 Of Lancelot on the wall : her scarlet
 sleeve,
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls
 away,
 Stream'd from it still ; and in her heart
 she laugh'd,
 Because he had not loosed it from his
 helm,
 But meant once more perchance to
 tourney in it.
 And when they gain'd the cell wherein
 he slept,
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty hands
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream
 Of dragging down his enemy made them
 move.
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek,
 unshorn,
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
 Utter'd a little tender dolorous cry.
 The sound not wonted in a place so still
 Woke the sick knight, and while he roll'd
 his eyes
 Yet blank from sleep, she started to him,
 saying,
 'Your prize the diamond sent you by the
 King :'
 His eyes glisten'd : she fancied 'Is it for
 me ?'
 And when the maid had told him all the
 tale
 Of King and Prince, the diamond sent,
 the quest
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,

And laid the diamond in his open hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the
child

That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her
face.

At once she slipt like water to the floor.
'Alas,' he said, 'your ride hath wearied
you.

Rest must you have.' 'No rest for me,'
she said ;

'Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest.'
What might she mean by that ? his large
black eyes,

Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon
her,

Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's colours on her simple face ;
And Lancelot look'd and was perplex't in
mind,

And being weak in body said no more ;
But did not love the colour ; woman's love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the
fields,

And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured
gates

Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;
There bode the night : but woke with
dawn, and past

Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave : so day by day she
past

In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended him,
And likewise many a night : and Lancelot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a little
hurt

Whereof he should be quickly whole, at
times

Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,
seem

Unconscientious, even he : but the meek
maid

Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him
Meeke than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first
fall,

Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love
Uppore her ; till the hermit, skill'd in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his
life.

And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet
Elaine,

Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their
best,

Closest and sweetest, and had died the
death

In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other
world

Another world for the sick man ; but now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sick-
ness made

Full many a holy vow and pure resolve
These, as but born of sickness, could not
live :

For when the blood ran lustier in him
again,

Full often the bright image of one face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.

Then if the maiden, while that ghostly
grace

Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he answer'd
 not,
 Or short and coldly, and she knew right
 well
 What the rough sickness meant, but what
 this meant
 She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd
 her sight,
 And drave her ere her time across the
 fields
 Far into the rich city, where alone
 She murmur'd, 'Vain, in vain : it cannot
 be.
 He will not love me : how then ? must
 I die ?'
 Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
 That has but one plain passage of few
 notes,
 Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
 For all an April morning, till the ear
 Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
 Went half the night repeating, 'Must I
 die ?'
 And now to right she turn'd, and now to
 left,
 And found no ease in turning or in
 rest ;
 And 'Him or death,' she mutter'd,
 'death or him,'
 Again and like a burthen, 'Him or death.'

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt
 was whole,
 To Astolat returning rode the three.
 There morn by morn, arraying her sweet
 self
 In that wherein she deem'd she look'd
 her best,
 She came before Sir Lancelot, for she
 thought
 'If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
 If not, the victim's flowers before he fall.'
 And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid

That she should ask some goodly gift of
 him
 For her own self or hers ; 'and do not
 shun
 To speak the wish most near to your true
 heart ;
 Such service have ye done me, that I make
 My will of yours, and Prince and Lord
 am I
 In mine own land, and what I will I can.'
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
 But like a ghost without the power to
 speak.
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld her
 wish,
 And bode among them yet a little space
 Till he should learn it ; and one morn it
 chanced
 He found her in among the garden yews,
 And said, Delay no longer, speak your
 wish,
 Seeing I go to-day : ' then out she brake :
 'Going ? and we shall never see you more.
 And I must die for want of one bold word.'
 'Speak : that I live to hear,' he said, 'is
 yours.'
 Then suddenly and passionately she spoke :
 'I have gone mad. I love you : let me
 die.'
 'Ah, sister,' answer'd Lancelot, 'what is
 this ?'
 And innocently extending her white arms,
 'Your love,' she said, 'your love—to be
 your wife.'
 And Lancelot answer'd, 'Had I chosen
 to wed,
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine :
 But now there never will be wife of mine.'
 'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be
 wife,
 But to be with you still, to see your face,
 To serve you, and to follow you thro' the
 world.'

And Lancelot answer'd, 'Nay, the world,
 the world,
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
 To interpret ear and eye, and such a
 tongue
 To blare its own interpretation—nay,
 Full ill then should I quit your brother's
 love,
 And your good father's kindness.' And
 she said,
 'Not to be with you, not to see your face—
 Alas for me then, my good days are done.'
 'Nay, noble maid,' he answer'd, 'ten
 times nay!
 This is not love: but love's first flash in
 youth,
 Most common: yea, I know it of mine
 own self:
 And you yourself will smile at your own
 self
 Hereafter, when you yield your flower of
 life
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice your
 age:
 And then will I, for true you are and
 sweet
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
 More specially should your good knight
 be poor,
 Endow you with broad land and territory
 Even to the half my realm beyond the
 seas,
 So that would make you happy: further-
 more,
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my
 blood,
 In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your sake,
 And more than this I cannot.'

While he spoke

She neither blush'd nor shook, but
 deathly pale

Stood gazing, which was nearest, that
 replied:

'Of all this will I nothing;' and so fell,
 And thus they bore her swimming to her
 tower.

Then spake he whom thro' those blank
 walls of yew
 Their talk had pierced, her father: 'Ay,
 a flash,
 I fear me, that will strike my Elson
 dead.
 Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
 I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
 To blunt or break her passion.'

Lancelot said,

'That were against me: what I can I
 will.'
 And there that day remain'd, and toward
 even
 Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the
 maid,
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked
 shield;
 Then, when she heard his horse upon the
 stones,
 Unclasping flung the casement back, and
 look'd
 Down on his helm, from which her lance
 had gone.
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking
 sound;
 And she by dint of love was well aware
 That Lancelot knew that she was looking
 at him.
 And yet he girted not up, nor waved
 his hand,
 Nor had farewell, but softly rode away.
 This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:
 Her very shield was gone; only the case,

Her own poor work, her empty labour,
left.

But still she heard him, still his picture
form'd

And grew between her and the pictured
wall.

Then came her father, saying in low tones,
'Have comfort,' whom she greeted
quietly.

Then came her brethren saying, 'Peace
to thee,

Sweet sister,' whom she answer'd with all
calm.

But when they left her to herself again,
Death, like a friend's voice from a distant
field

Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd ;
the owls

Wailing had power upon her, and she
mixt

Her fancies with the fallow-rifted glooms
Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little
song,

And call'd her song 'The Song of Love
and Death,'

And sang it : sweetly could she make
and sing.

'Sweet is true love tho' given in vain,
in vain ;

And sweet is death who puts an end to
pain :

I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'Love, art thou sweet? then bitter
death must be :

Love, thou art bitter ; sweet is death to me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

'Sweet love, that seems not made to
fade away,

Sweet death, that seems to make us love-
less clay,

I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'I fain would follow love, if that could
be ;

I needs must follow death, who calls for
me ;

Call and I follow, I follow ! let me die.'

High with the last line scaled her voice,
and this,

All in a fiery dawning wild with wind
That shook her tower, the brothers heard,
and thought

With shuddering, 'Hark the Phantom of
the house

That ever shrieks before a death,' and
call'd

The father, and all three in hurry and fear
Ran to her, and lo ! the blood-red light
of dawn

Flared on her face, she shrilling, 'Let
me die !'

As when we dwell upon a word we
know,

Repeating, till the word we know so well
Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,
So dwelt the father on her face, and
thought

'Is this Elaine?' till back the maiden fell,
Then gave a languid hand to each, and
lay,

Speaking a still good-morrow with her
eyes.

At last she said, 'Sweet brothers, yester-
night

I seem'd a curious little maid again,
As happy as when we dwelt among the
woods,

And when ye used to take me with the
flood

Up the great river in the boatman's boat.
 Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
 That has the poplar on it : there ye fixt
 Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
 And yet I cried because ye would not pass
 Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
 Until we found the palace of the King.
 And yet ye would not ; but this night I
 dream'd

That I was all alone upon the flood,
 And then I said, "Now shall I have my
 will :"

And there I woke, but still the wish
 remain'd.

So let me hence that I may pass at last
 Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
 Until I find the palace of the King.
 There will I enter in among them all,
 And no man there will dare to mock at
 me ;

But there the fine Gawain will wonder at
 me,

And there the great Sir Lancelot muse
 at me ;

Gawain, who bad a thousand farewells to
 me,

Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bad me
 one :

And there the King will know me and
 my love,

And there the Queen herself will pity me,
 And all the gentle court will welcome
 me,

And after my long voyage I shall rest !'

'Peace,' said her father, 'O my child,
 ye seem

Light-headed, for what force is yours to
 go

So far, being sick ? and wherefore would
 ye look

On this proud fellow again, who scorns
 us all ?'

Then the rough Torre began to heave
 and move,
 And bluster into stormy sobs and say,
 'I never loved him : an I meet with him.
 I care not howsoever great he be,
 Then will I strike at him and strike him
 down,
 Give me good fortune, I will strike him
 dead,
 For this discomfort he hath done the
 house.'

To whom the gentle sister made reply,
 'Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be
 wroth,
 Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
 Not to love me, than it is mine to love
 Him of all men who seems to me the
 highest.'

'Highest ?' the father answer'd, echoing
 'highest ?'
 (He meant to break the passion in her)
 'nay,

Daughter, I know not what you call the
 highest ;

But this I know, for all the people know it,
 He loves the Queen, and in an open shame :
 And she returns his love in open shame ;
 If this be high, what is it to be low ?'

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat :
 'Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
 For anger : these are slanders : never yet
 Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
 He makes no friend who never made a foe.
 But now it is my glory to have loved
 One peerless, without stain : so let me
 pass.

My father, howsoever I seem to you,
 Not all unhappy, having loved God's best
 And greatest, tho' my love had no return :
 Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,

Thanks, but you work against your own
 desire ;
 For if I could believe the things you say
 I should but die the sooner ; wherefore
 cease,
 Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
 Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and
 die.'

So when the ghostly man had come and
 gone,
 She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
 Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
 A letter, word for word ; and when he
 ask'd,
 'Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord ?
 Then will I bear it gladly ;' she replied,
 'For Lancelot and the Queen and all the
 world,
 But I myself must bear it.' Then he wrote
 The letter she devised ; which being writ
 And folded, 'O sweet father, tender and
 true,
 Deny me not,' she said—'ye never yet
 Denied my fancies—this, however strange,
 My latest : lay the letter in my hand
 A little ere I die, and close the hand
 Upon it ; I shall guard it even in death.
 And when the heat is gone from out my
 heart,
 Then take the little bed on which I died
 For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the
 Queen's
 For richness, and me also like the Queen
 In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
 And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
 To take me to the river, and a barge
 Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
 I go in state to court, to meet the Queen.
 There surely I shall speak for mine own
 self,
 And none of you can speak for me so well.
 And therefore let our dumb old man alone

Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
 Will guide me to that palace, to the doors.'

She ceased : her father promised ; where-
 upon
 She grew so cheerful that they deem'd her
 death
 Was rather in the fantasy than the blood.
 But ten slow mornings past, and on the
 eleventh
 Her father laid the letter in her hand,
 And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
 So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from
 underground,
 Then, those two brethren slowly with bent
 brows
 Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
 Past like a shadow thro' the field, that
 shone
 Full-summer, to that stream whereon the
 barge,
 Pall'd all its length in blackest samite, lay.
 There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
 So those two brethren from the chariot took
 And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
 Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
 The silken case with braided blazonings,
 And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to
 her
 'Sister, farewell for ever,' and again
 'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in tears.
 Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the
 dead,
 Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with
 the flood—
 In her right hand the lily, in her left
 The letter—all her bright hair streaming
 down—
 And all the coverlid was cloth of gold

Drawn to her waist, and she herself in
white
All but her face, and that clear-featured
face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast-asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace
craved
Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and
blow,
With deaths of others, and almost his own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds : for
he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the
Queen
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen
agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seem'd her statue, but
that he,
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd her
feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the
walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the
stream,
They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd,
'Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy.
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making
them
An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the
swan's

Is tawnier than her cygnet's : these are
words :
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin
in words
Perchance, we both can pardon : but, my
Queen,
I hear of rumours flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and
wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect : let rumours be ;
When did not rumours fly ? these, as I
trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe.'

While thus he spoke, half turn'd away,
the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them
off,
Till all the place whereon she stood was
green ;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive
hand
Received at once and laid aside the jewels
There on a table near her, and replied :

'It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the
Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoever of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and
wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are
these ?
Diamonds for me ! they had been thrice
their worth

Being your gift, had you not lost your
own.

To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me !
For her ! for your new fancy. Only this
Grant me, I pray you : have your joys
apart.

I doubt not that however changed, you
keep

So much of what is graceful : and myself
Would shun to break those bounds of
courtesy

In which as Arthur's Queen I move and
rule :

So cannot speak my mind. An end to
this !

A strange one ! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her
pearls ;

Deck her with these ; tell her, she shines
me down :

An armlet for an arm to which the
Queen's

Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer—as a faith once fair
Was richer than these diamonds—hers
not mine—

Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my
will—

She shall not have them.'

Saying which she seized,

And, thro' the casement standing wide
for heat,

Flung them, and down they flash'd, and
smote the stream.

Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as
it were,

Diamonds to meet them, and they past
away.

Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half
disdain

At love, life, all things, on the window
ledge,

Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Where these had fallen, slowly past the
barge

Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst
away

To weep and wail in secret ; and the
barge,

On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.
There two stood arm'd, and kept the
door ; to whom,

All up the marble stair, tier over tier,
Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes
that ask'd

'What is it ?' but that oarsman's haggard
face,

As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancy's eye from broken
rocks

On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they
said,

'He is enchanted, cannot speak—and she,
Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen,
so fair !

Yea, but how pale ! what are they ? flesh
and blood ?

Or come to take the King to fairyland ?
For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
But that he passes into fairyland.'

While thus they babbled of the King,
the King

Came girt with knights : then turn'd the
tongueless man

From the half-face to the full eye, and
rose

And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
So Arthur bad the meek Sir Percivale
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid :

And reverently they bore her into hall.
 Then came the sire Gawain and wonder'd
 at her,
 And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
 And last the Queen herself, and pitied her :
 But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
 Slept, took, brake seal, and read it ;
 this was all :

'Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the
 Lake,

I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
 Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
 Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
 I loved you, and my love had no return,
 And therefore my true love has been my
 death.

And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,
 And to all other ladies, I make moan.
 Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
 Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
 As thou art a knight peerless.'

Thus he read ;

And ever in the reading, lords and dames
 Wept, looking often from his face who read
 To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
 So touch'd were they, half-thinking that
 her lips,
 Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them
 all :

'My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that
 hear,
 Know that for this most gentle maiden's
 death
 Right heavy am I ; for good she was and
 true,
 But loved me with a love beyond all love
 In women, whomsoever I have known.
 Yet to be loved makes not to love again ;
 Not at my years, however it hold in youth.

I swear by truth and knighthood that I
 gave

No cause, not willingly, for such a love :
 This I call my friends in testimony,
 His brethren, and her father, who himself
 Pursueth me to be plain and blunt, and use,
 To break her passion, some discourtesy
 Against my nature : what I could, I did.
 I left her and I bid her no farewell ;
 That had I dreamt the damsel would
 have died,
 I might have put my wits to some rough use,
 And help'd her from herself.'

Then said the Queen

(Sea was her wrath, yet working after
 storm)

'Ye might at least have done her so
 much grace,

Fair lord, as would have help'd her from
 her death.'

He raised his head, their eyes met and
 hers fell,

He adding,

'Queen, she would not be content
 Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
 Then might she follow me thro' the world,
 she ask'd ;

It could not be. I told her that her love
 Was but the flash of youth, would darken
 down

To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
 Toward one more worthy of her—then
 would I,

More especially were he, she wedded, poor,
 Estate them with large land and territory
 In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
 To keep them in all joyance ; more than this
 I could not ; this she would not, and she
 died.'

He pausing, Arthur answer'd. 'O my
 knight,

It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully.'

So toward that shrine which then in all
the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshall'd Order of their Table
Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to
see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely
head
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, 'Let
her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon
And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her tomb
In letters gold and azure!' which was
wrought
Thereafter; but when now the lords and
dames
And people, from the high door streaming,
brake
Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he
moved apart,
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing,
'Lancelot,
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in love.'
He answer'd with his eyes upon the
ground,
'That is love's curse; pass on, my Queen,
forgiven.'
But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy brows,
Approach'd him, and with full affection
said,

'Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom
I have
Most joy and most affianced, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watch'd thee at
the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long-practised
knight,
And let the younger and unskill'd go by
To win his honour and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
Made to be loved; but now I would to
God,
Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes,
Thou couldst have loved this maiden,
shaped, it seems,
By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now
lonely man
Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the
Lake.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, 'Fair she was,
my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a
heart -
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could bind him, but free love will not be
bound.'

'Free love, so bound, were freest,' said
the King.
'Let love be free; free love is for the best:
And, after heaven, on our dull side of
death,
What should be best, if not so pure a love
Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet thee

She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know.

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but
he went,

And at the inrunning of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her
moving down,

Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
Low in himself, 'Ah simple heart and
sweet,

Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a love
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for
thy soul?

Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at
last—

Farewell, fair lily. "Jealousy in love?"
Not rather dead love's harsh heir, jealous
pride?

Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
May not your crescent fear for name and
fame

Speak, as it waxes, of a love that waxes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to
me?

Mine own name shames me, seeming a
reproach,

Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
Caught from his mother's arms—the
wondrous one

Who passes thro' the vision of the night—
She chanted snatches of mysterious hymns
Heard on the winding waters, eve and
morn

She kiss'd me saying, "Thou art fair,
my child,

As a king's son," and often in her arms
She bare me, pacing on the dusky mere.
Would she had drown'd me in it, where'er
it be!

For what am I? what profits me my name

Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and
have it:

Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain;
Now grown a part of me: but what use in
it?

To make men worse by making my sin
known?

Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must
break

These bonds that so defame me: not
without

She wills it: would I, if she will'd it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then
may God,

I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the
hills.'

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful
pain,

Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prowess
done

In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd
The Pure,

Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving for
the cowl

The helmet in an abbey far away
From Camelot, there, and not long after,
died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the rest
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond the
rest,

And honour'd him, and wrought into his
heart
A way by love that waken'd love within,
To answer that which came : and as they
sat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darkening
half
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puff'd the swaying branches into
smoke
Above them, ere the summer when he died,
The monk Ambrosius question'd Per-
civale :

'O brother, I have seen this yew-tree
smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred
years :
For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale : but thee,
When first thou camest—such a courtesy
Spake thro' the limbs and in the voice—I
knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur's hall ;
For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamp'd with the image of the King ; and
now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table
Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion crost?'

'Nay,' said the knight ; 'for no such
passion mine.
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle
out
Among us in the jousts, while women
watch
Who wins, who falls ; and waste the
spiritual strength
Within us, better offer'd up to Heaven.'

To whom the monk : 'The Holy
Grail !—I trust
We are green in Heaven's eyes ; but here
too much
We moulder—as to things without I
mean—
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of
ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low
We heard not half of what he said. What
is it ?
The phantom of a cup that comes and
goes?'

'Nay, monk ! what phantom?' answer'd
Percivale.
'The cup, the cup itself, from which our
Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his
own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the good
saint,
Arimathean Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our
Lord.
And there awhile it bode ; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at
once,
By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and dis-
appear'd.'

To whom the monk : 'From our old
books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to
build ;

And there he built with wattles from the
marsh

A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours, but
seem

Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-day?

'A woman,' answer'd Percivale, 'a
nun,

And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone.
A holy maid; tho' never maiden glow'd,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced and
shot

Only to holy things; to prayer and praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms. And
yet,

Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adulterous
race,

Across the iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all the
more.

'And he to whom she told her sins, or
what

Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down thro' five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord's time. And when King
Arthur made

His Table Round, and all men's hearts
became

Clean for a season, surely he had thought
That now the Holy Grail would come
again;

But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it
would come,

And heal the world of all their wickedness!
"O Father!" ask'd the maiden, "might
it come

To me by prayer and fasting?" "Nay,"
said he,

"I know not, for thy heart is pure as
snow."

And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun
Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and
I thought

She might have risen and floated when I
saw her.

'For on a day she sent to speak with
me.

And when she came to speak, behold her
eyes

Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,
Beautiful in the light of holiness.

And "O my brother Percivale," she
said,

"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy
Grail:

For, waked at dead of night, I heard a
sound

As of a silver horn from o'er the hills

Blown, and I thought, 'It is not Arthur's
use

To hunt by moonlight;' and the slender
sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me—O never harp nor
horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch
with hand,

Was like that music as it came; and then
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver
beam,

And down the long beam stole the Holy
Grail;

Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were
dyed

With rosy colours leaping on the wall ;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the
walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too and
pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and
pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be
heal'd."

'Then leaving the pale nun, I spake
of this

To all men ; and myself fasted and
pray'd

Always, and many among us many a week
Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,
Expectant of the wonder that would be.

'And one there was among us, ever
moved

Among us in white armour, Galahad.

"God make thee good as thou art beau-
tiful,"

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight ;
and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a
knight

Till Galahad ; and this Galahad, when
he heard

My sister's vision, fill'd me with amaze ;
His eyes became so like her own, they
seem'd

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

'Sister or brother none had he ; but
some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some
said

Begotten by enchantment — chatterers
they,

Like birds of passage piping up and
down,

That gape for flies—we know not whence
they come ;

For when was Lancelot wanderingly
lewd ?

'But she, the wan sweet maiden, shore
away

Clean from her forehead all that wealth
of hair

Which made a silken mat-work for her
feet ;

And out of this she plaited broad and long
A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver
thread

And crimson in the belt a strange device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam ;

And saw the bright boy-knight, and
bound it on him,

Saying, "My knight, my love, my knight
of heaven,

O thou, my love, whose love is one with
mine,

I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my
belt.

Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have
seen,

And break thro' all, till one will crown
thee king

Far in the spiritual city : " and as she
spake

She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid

her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.

'Then came a year of miracle : O
brother,

In our great hall there stood a vacant
chair,

Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
And carven with strange figures; and in
and out

The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
Of letters in a tongue no man could read.
And Merlin call'd it "The Siege peri-
ous,"

Perilous for good and ill; "for there,"
he said,

"No man could sit but he should lose
himself:"

And once by misadventence Merlin sat
In his own chair, and so was lost; but he,
Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
Cried, "If I lose myself, I save myself!"

'Then on a summer night it came to
pass,
While the great banquet lay along the
hall,
That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's
chair.

'And all at once, as there we sat, we
heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and overhead
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
And in the blast there smote along the hall
A beam of light seven times more clear
than day:

And down the long beam stole the Holy
Grail

All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,
And none might see who bare it, and it
past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's face
As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
And staring each at other like dumb men
stood, till I found a voice and sware a
vow.

'I sware a vow before them all, that I,
Because I had not seen the Grail, would
ride

A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it.
I will I found and saw it, or the nun
My sister saw it; and Galahad sware the
vow,

And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin,
swore,

And Lancelot sware, and many among
the knights,

And Gawain sware, and louder than the
rest.'

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, ask-
ing him,
'What said the King? Did Arthur take
the vow?'

'Nay, for my lord,' said Percivale,
'the King,

Was not in hall: for early that same day,
Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit hold,
An outraged maiden sprang into the hall
Crying on help: for all her shining hair
Was smear'd with earth, and either milky
arm

Roll'd rent with hooks of bramble, and all
she wore

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn
In tatters: so the King arose and went
To smoke the scandalous hive of those
wild bees

That made such honey in his realm.
Howbeit

Some little of this marvel he had saw,
Returning thro' the plain that then began
To darken under Casselot; whereon the
King

Look'd on, calling aloud, "Is there
the road?"

Of our great hall are roll'd in thunder-
crash!

Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by the bolt."

For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,
As having there so oft with all his knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under
heaven.

'O brother, had you known our mighty
hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing
brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin
built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set
betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall:
And in the lowest beasts are slaying men,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing
wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern
Star.
And eastward fronts the statue, and the
crown
And both the wings are made of gold,
and flame
At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

'And, brother, had you known our hall
within,
Broader and higher than any in all the
lands!
Where twelve great windows blazon
Arthur's wars,

And all the light that falls upon the board
Streams thro' the twelve great battles of
our King.

Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount
and mere,

Where Arthur finds the brand Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank: and who shall blazon it?
when and how?—

O there, perchance, when all our wars are
done,
The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

'So to this hall full quickly rode the
King,
In horror lest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish,
wrapt
In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw
The golden dragon sparkling over all:
And many of those who burnt the hold,
their arms
Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed with
smoke, and sear'd,
Follow'd, and in among bright faces, ours,
Full of the vision, prest: and then the
King
Spake to me, being nearest, "Percivale,"
(Because the hall was all in tumult—some
Vowing, and some protesting), "what is
this?"

'O brother, when I told him what had
chanced,
My sister's vision, and the rest, his face
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than
once,
When some brave deed seem'd to be done
in vain,
Darken; and "Woe is me, my knights,"
he cried,

"Had I been here, ye had not sworn the
vow."

Bold was mine answer, "Had thyself
been here,

My King, thou wouldst have sworn."

"Yea, yea," said he.

"Art thou so bold and hast not seen the
Grail?"

"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I saw
the light,

But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw."

"Then when he ask'd us, knight by
knight, if any

Had seen it, all their answers were as one:

"Nay, lord, and therefore have we sworn
our vows."

"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye
seen a cloud?

What go ye into the wilderness to see?"

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and in
a voice

Skimming along the hall to Arthur, call'd,

"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,

I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—

"O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me!"

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the
King, "for such

As thou art is the vision, not for these.

Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign—

Holier is none, my Percivale, than she—

A sign to maim this Order which I made.

But ye, that follow but the leader's bell"

(Brother, the King was hard upon his
knights)

"Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,

And one hath sung and all the dumb will
sing.

Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
Five knights at once, and every younger
knight,

Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,

Till overborne by one, he learns—and ye.

What are ye? Galahad? no, nor Per-
civales."

(For thus it pleased the King to range me
close

After Sir Galahad); "nay," said he,
"but men

With strength and will to right the
wrong'd, of power

To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,
Knights that in twelve great battles
splash'd and dyed

The strong White Horse in his own
heathen blood—

But one hath seen, and all the blind will
see.

Go, since your vows are sacred, being
made:

Yet—for ye know the cries of all my realm
Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my
knights,

Your places being vacant at my side,

This chance of noble deeds will come
and go

Unchallenged, while ye follow wandering
fires.

Lost in the paganism! Many of you, ye
most,

Return no more: ye think I show myself
Too dark a prophet: come now, let us meet

The morrow morn once more in one full
field

Of gracious pastime, that once more the
King,

Before ye leave him for this Guest, may
count

The yet-unbroken strength of all his
knights,

Rejoicing in that Order which he made."

‘So when the sun broke next from
under ground,
All the great table of our Arthur closed
And clash’d in such a tourney and so full,
So many lances broken—never yet
Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur
came;
And I myself and Galahad, for a strength
Was in us from the vision, overthrew
So many knights that all the people cried,
And almost burst the barriers in their
heat,
Shouting, “Sir Galahad and Sir Perci-
vale!”

‘But when the next day brake from
under ground—
O brother, had you known our Camelot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so old
The King himself had fears that it would
fall,
So strange, and rich, and dim; for where
the roofs
Totted toward each other in the sky,
Met foreheads all along the street of those
Who watch’d us pass; and lower, and
where the long
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh’d the
necks
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
Thicker than drops from thunder, showers
of flowers
Fell as we past; and men and boys astride
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us each by name,
Calling “God speed!” but in the ways
below
The knights and ladies wept, and rich
and poor
Wept, and the King himself could hardly
speak
For grief, and all in middle street the
Queen,

Who rode by Lancelot, wail’d and shriek’d
aloud,
“This madness has come on us for our
sins.”
So to the Gate of the three Queens we
came,
Where Arthur’s wars are render’d mys-
tically,
And thence departed every one his way.

‘And I was lifted up in heart, and
thought
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,
How my strong lance had beaten down
the knights,
So many and famous names; and never
yet
Had heaven appear’d so blue, nor earth
so green,
For all my blood danced in me, and I
knew
That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

‘Thereafter, the dark warning of our
King,
That most of us would follow wandering
fires,
Came like a driving gloom across my
mind.
Then every evil word I had spoken once,
And every evil thought I had thought of
old,
And every evil deed I ever did,
Awoke and cried, “This Quest is not for
thee.”
And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death;
And I, too, cried, “This Quest is not for
thee.”

‘And on I rode, and when I thought
my thirst

Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then
a brook,

With one sharp rapid, where the crisping
white

Play'd ever back upon the sloping wave,
And took both ear and eye ; and o'er the
brook

Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook
Fallen, and on the lawns. "I will rest
here,"

I said, "I am not worthy of the Quest ;"
But even while I drank the brook, and ate
The goodly apples, all these things at once
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

And then behold a woman at a door
Spinning ; and fair the house whereby she
sat,

And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,
And all her bearing gracious ; and she rose
Opening her arms to meet me, as who
should say,

"Rest here ;" but when I touch'd her, fell
she, too,

Fell into dust and nothing, and the house
Became no better than a broken shell,
And in it a dead babe ; and also this
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

And on I rode, and greater was my
thirst.

Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the
world,

And where it smote the plowshare in the
field,

The plowman left his plowing, and fell
down

Before it ; where it glitter'd on her pail,
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell
down

Before it, and I knew not why, but
thought

"The sun is rising," tho' the sun had risen.
Then was I ware of one that on me moved
In golden armour with a crown of gold
About a casque all jewels ; and his horse
In golden armour jewell'd everywhere :
And on the splendour came, flashing me
blind ;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the
world,

Being so huge. But when I thought he
meant

To crush me, moving on me, lo ! he, too,
Open'd his arms to embrace me as he
came,

And up I went and touch'd him, and he,
too,

Fell into dust, and I was left alone
And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

'And I rode on and found a mighty
hill,

And on the top, a city wall'd : the spire-
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into
heaven.

And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd ; and
these

Cried to me climbing, "Welcome, Perci-
vale !

Thou mightiest and thou purest among
men !"

And glad was I and dumb, but found at top
No man, nor any voice. And thence I
past

Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw
That man had once dwelt there ; but
there I found

Only one man of an exceeding age.

"Where is that goodly company," said I,
"That so crieth out upon me ?" and he had
Scarcely any voice to answer, and yet
gasp'd,

"Whence and what art thou ?" and even
as he spoké

Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I
 Was left alone once more, and cried in
 grief,
 "Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself
 And touch it, it will crumble into dust."

'And thence I dropt into a lowly vale,
 Low as the hill was high, and where the
 vale
 Was lowest, found a chapel, and thereby
 A holy hermit in a hermitage,
 To whom I told my phantoms, and he
 said :

"O son, thou hast not true humility,
 The highest virtue, mother of them all ;
 For when the Lord of all things made
 Himself
 Naked of glory for His mortal change,
 'Take thou my robe,' she said, 'for all is
 thine,'
 And all her form shone forth with sudden
 light
 So that the angels were amazed, and she
 Follow'd Him down, and like a flying star
 Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the east ;
 But her thou hast not known : for what
 is this
 Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy
 sins ?
 Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
 As Galahad." When the hermit made
 an end,
 In silver armour suddenly Galahad shone
 Before us, and against the chapel door
 Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt in
 prayer.
 And there the hermit slaked my burning
 thirst,
 And at the sacring of the mass I saw
 The holy elements alone ; but he,
 "Saw ye no more ? I, Galahad, saw the
 Grail,

The Holy Grail, descend upon the shrine :
 I saw the fiery face as of a child
 That smote itself into the bread, and went ;
 And hither am I come ; and never yet
 Hath what thysister taught me first to see,
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side, nor
 come
 Cover'd, but moving with me night and
 day,
 Fainter by day, but always in the night
 Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd
 marsh
 Blood-red, and on the naked mountain
 top
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
 Blood-red. And in the strength of this I
 rode,
 Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
 And past thro' Pagan realms, and made
 them mine,
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore
 them down,
 And broke thro' all, and in the strength
 of this
 Come victor. But my time is hard at
 hand,
 And hence I go ; and one will crown me
 king
 Far in the spiritual city ; and come thou,
 too,
 For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

'While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling
 on mine,
 Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
 One with him, to believe as he believed.
 Then, when the day began to wane, we
 went.

'There rose a hill that none but man
 could climb,
 Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-
 courses—

Storm at the top, and when we gain'd it,
 storm
 Round us and death ; for every moment
 glanced
 His silver arms and gloom'd : so quick
 and thick
 The lightnings here and there to left and
 right
 Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,
 dead,
 Vea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
 Sprang into fire ; and at the base we found
 On either hand, as far as eye could see,
 A great black swamp and of an evil smell,
 Part black, part whiten'd with the bones
 of men,
 Not to be crost, save that some ancient
 king
 Had built a way, where, link'd with
 many a bridge,
 A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.
 And Galahad fled along them bridge by
 bridge,
 And every bridge as quickly as he crost
 Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I
 yearn'd
 To follow ; and thrice above him all the
 heavens
 Open'd and blazed with thunder such as
 seem'd
 Shoutings of all the sons of God : and first
 At once I saw him far on the great Sea,
 In silver-shining armour starry-clear ;
 And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
 Clothed in white samite or a luminous
 cloud.
 And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
 If boat it were—I saw not whence it came.
 And when the heavens open'd and blazed
 again
 Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—
 And had he set the sail, or had the boat
 Become a living creature clad with wings ?

And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
 Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
 For now I knew the veil had been with-
 drawn.
 Then in a moment when they blazed again
 Opening, I saw the least of little stars
 Down on the waste, and straight beyond
 the star
 I saw the spiritual city and all her spire—
 And gateways in a glory like one pearl—
 No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—
 Strike from the sea ; and from the star
 there shot
 A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
 Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
 Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
 Then fell the floods of heaven drowning
 the deep.
 And how my feet recrost the deathful ridge
 No memory in me lives ; but that I touch'd
 The chapel-doors at dawn I know ; and
 thence
 Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
 Glad that no phantom vext me more,
 return'd
 To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's
 wars.'

'O brother,' ask'd Ambrosius,—'for
 in sooth
 These ancient books—and they would win
 thee—teen,
 Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
 With miracles and marvels like to these,
 Not all unlike ; which oftentime I read,
 Who read but on my breviary with care,
 Till my head swims ; and then go forth
 and pass
 Down to the little thorpe that lies so close,
 And almost plaster'd like a martin's nest
 To these old walls—and mingle with our
 folk ;
 And knowing every honest face of theirs

As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,
 And every homely secret in their hearts,
 Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
 And ills and aches, and teethings, lyings-
 in,
 And mirthful sayings, children of the place,
 That have no meaning half a league away :
 Or lulling random squabbles when they
 rise,
 Chafferings and chatterings at the market-
 cross,
 Rejoice, small man, in this small world
 of mine,
 Yea, even in their hens and in their eggs—
 O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,
 Came ye on none but phantoms in your
 quest,
 No man, no woman ?'

Then Sir Percivale :

' All men, to one so bound by such a vow,
 And women were as phantoms. O, my
 brother,
 Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee
 How far I falter'd from my quest and vow ?
 For after I had lain so many nights,
 A bedmate of the snail and eft and snake,
 In grass and burdock, I was changed to
 wan
 And meagre, and the vision had not come ;
 And then I chanced upon a goodly town
 With one great dwelling in the middle of
 it ;
 Thither I made, and there was I disarm'd
 By maidens each as fair as any flower :
 But when they led me into hall, behold,
 The Princess of that castle was the one,
 Brother, and that one only, who had ever
 Made my heart leap ; for when I moved
 of old
 A slender page about her father's hall,
 And she a slender maiden, all my heart
 Went after her with longing : yet we twain

Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a vow.
 And now I came upon her once again,
 And one had wedded her, and he was dead,
 And all his land and wealth and state
 were hers.
 And while I tarried, every day she set
 A banquet richer than the day before
 By me ; for all her longing and her will
 Was toward me as of old ; till one fair
 morn,
 I walking to and fro beside a stream
 That flash'd across her orchard underneath
 Her castle-walls, she stole upon my walk,
 And calling me the greatest of all knights,
 Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the first
 time,
 And gave herself and all her wealth to me.
 Then I remember'd Arthur's warning
 word,
 That most of us would follow wandering
 fires,
 And the Quest faded in my heart. Anon,
 The heads of all her people drew to me,
 With supplication both of knees and
 tongue :
 " We have heard of thee : thou art our
 greatest knight,
 Our Lady says it, and we well believe :
 Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
 And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land."
 O me, my brother ! but one night my vow
 Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,
 But wail'd and wept, and hated mine own
 self,
 And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but her ;
 Then after I was join'd with Galahad
 Cared not for her, nor anything upon
 earth.'

Then said the monk, ' Poor men, when
 yule is cold,
 Must be content to sit by little fires.
 And this am I, so that ye care for me

Ever so little ; you, and I, set be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house
of ours.

Where all the brethren are so hard, to
warm.

My cold heart with a friend : but O the
pity

To find thine own first love once more—
to hold,

Hold her a wealthy bride within thine
arms,

Or all but lost, and then—cast her aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a weed.
For we that want the warmth of double
life,

We that are plagued with dreams of
something sweet

Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,—

Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthlywise,
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,

But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none
beside,

None of your knights ?

‘Yea so,’ said Percivale :

‘One night my pathway swerving east, I
saw

The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon :

And toward him spur’d, and hail’d him,
and he me,

And each made joy of either ; then he
ask’d,

“Where is he? hast thou seen him—
Lancelot?—Once.”

Said good Sir Bors, “he dash’d across me
—mad,

And maddening what he rode : and when
I cried,

‘Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
So holy, Lancelot thou art,’ ‘Stay me not !

I have been the longest, and I did say,
For now there is a lion in the way.’
So vanish’d.”

‘Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had return’d ;
For Lancelot’s kith and kin so worship
him

That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors
Beyond the rest : he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have
seen,

The Holy Cup of healing ; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the Holy Quest :
If God would send the vision, well : if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of
Heaven.

‘And then, with small adventure met,
Sir Bors

Rode to the lonest tract of all the realm,
And found a people there among their
crag,

Our race and blood, a remnant that were
left

Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
They pitch up straight to heaven : and
their wise men

Were strong in that old magic which can
trace

The wandering of the stars, and scoff’d at
him

And this high Quest as at a simple thing ;
Told him he follow’d—almost Arthur’s
words—

A mocking fire : “what other fire than he,
Whereby the blood beats, and the blossom
flows,

And the second, and all the world is
warm’d ?”

And when his answer chafed them, the
 rough crowd,
 Hearing he had a difference with their
 priests,
 Seized him, and bound and plunged him
 into a cell
 Of great piled stones ; and lying bounden
 there
 In darkness thro' innumerable hours
 He heard the hollow-ringing heavens
 sweep
 Over him till by miracle—what else?—
 Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and
 fell,
 Such as no wind could move : and thro'
 the gap
 Glimmer'd the streaming scud : then
 came a night
 Still as the day was loud ; and thro' the gap
 The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table
 Round—
 For, brother, so one night, because they
 roll
 Thro' such a round in heaven, we named
 the stars,
 Rejoicing in ourselves and in our King—
 And these, like bright eyes of familiar
 friends,
 In on him shone : “And then to me, to
 me,”
 Said good Sir Bors, “beyond all hopes of
 mine,
 Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for
 myself—
 Across the seven clear stars—O grace to
 me—
 In colour like the fingers of a hand
 Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
 Glided and past, and close upon it peal'd
 A sharp quick thunder.” Afterwards, a
 maid,
 Who kept our holy faith among her kin
 In secret, entering, loosed and let him go.'

To whom the monk : ‘And I remember
 now
 That pelican on the casque : Sir Bors it
 was
 Who spake so low and sadly at our board ;
 And mighty reverent at our grace was he :
 A square-set man and honest ; and his
 eyes,
 An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
 Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath a
 cloud,
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny one :
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else ? But when
 ye reach'd
 The city, found ye all your knights
 return'd,
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy,
 Tell me, and what said each, and what
 the King ?'

Then answer'd Percivale : ‘And that
 can I,
 Brother, and truly ; since the living words
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our King
 Pass not from door to door and out again,
 But sit within the house. O, when we
 reach'd
 The city, our horses stumbling as they
 trode
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cocka-
 trices,
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left the
 stones
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us to
 the hall.

‘And there sat Arthur on the dais-
 throne,
 And those that had gone out upon the
 Quest,
 Wasted and worn, and but a title of
 them,

And those that had not, stand before the
King,

Who, when he saw me, rose, and laid
me full,

Saying, "A welfare in thine eye reproves
Our fear of some disastrous chance for thee

On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding ford,
So fierce a gale made havoc here of late

Among the strange devices of our kings ;
Yea, shak'st thou newer, stronger hall of ours,

And from the steeple Martin wouldst bid for us
Half-wrench'd a golden wing ; but now—
the Quest,

Thy vision—hast thou seen the Holy Cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-
bury?"

"So when I told him all thyself hast
heard,

Androsius, and my fresh but fixt resolve
To pass away into the quiet life,

He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,
ask'd

Of Gawain, "Gawain, was this Quest for
thee?"

"Nay, lord," said Gawain, "not for
such as I.

Therefore I communed with a saintly man,
Who made me sure the Quest was not for
me ;

For I was much awearied of the Quest ;
But found a silk pavilion in a field,

And merry maidens in it ; and then this
gale

Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
And blew my merry maidens all about

With all discomfort ; yea, and but for this,
My twelvemonth and a day were pleasant
to me."

"He ceased ; and Arthur turn'd to
whom at first

He saw not, for so there on uttermost
stood

Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught
his hand,

Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,
stood.

Until the King espied him, saying to him,
"Hail, Bors ! if ever loyal man and true

Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail ;"
and Bors,

"Ask me not, for I may not speak of it :
I saw it ;" and the tears were in his eyes.

"Then there remain'd but Lancelot, for
the rest

Spake but of sundry perils in the storm ;
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,

Our Arthur kept his best until the last ;
"Thou, too, my Lancelot," asked the

King, "my friend,
Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd for
thee?"

"Our mightiest !" answer'd Lancelot,
with a groan ;

"O King !"—and when he pass'd,
methought I spied

A flying fire of madness in his eyes—
"O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,

Happier are those that welter in their sin,
swine in the mud, that cannot see for

slime,
Slime of the ditch : but in me lived the
serpent—of such a kind, that all of pure

Sable, and knightly in me twined and
clung

bound that one sin, until the wholesome
flower

And poisonous grew together, each as
each,

Not to be pluck'd or tender ; and when Gay
knights

Swore, I swore—with them only in the hope

That could I touch or see the Holy Grail
 They might be pluck'd asunder. Then I
 spake
 To one most holy saint, who wept and
 said,
 That save they could be pluck'd asunder,
 all
 My quest were but in vain; to whom I
 vow'd
 That I would work according as he will'd.
 And forth I went, and while I yearn'd
 and strove
 To tear the twain asunder in my heart,
 My madness came upon me as of old,
 And whipt me into waste fields far away;
 There was I beaten down by little men,
 Mean knights, to whom the moving of
 my sword
 And shadow of my spear had been enow
 To scare them from me once; and then
 I came
 All in my folly to the naked shore,
 Wide flats, where nothing but coarse
 grasses grew;
 But such a blast, my King, began to blow,
 So loud a blast along the shore and sea,
 Ye could not hear the waters for the blast,
 Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the
 sea
 Drove like a cataract, and all the sand
 Swept like a river, and the clouded
 heavens
 Were shaken with the motion and the
 sound.
 And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd a
 boat,
 Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a
 chain;
 And in my madness to myself I said,
 'I will embark and I will lose myself,
 And in the great sea wash away my sin.'
 I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat.
 Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,

And with me drove the moon and all the
 stars;
 And the wind fell, and on the seventh
 night
 I heard the shingle grinding in the surge,
 And felt the boat shock earth, and looking
 up,
 Behold, the enchanted towers of Car-
 bonek,
 A castle like a rock upon a rock,
 With chasm-like portals open to the
 sea,
 And steps that met the breaker! there
 was none
 Stood near it but a lion on each side
 That kept the entry, and the moon was
 full.
 Then from the boat I leapt, and up the
 stairs.
 There drew my sword. With sudden-
 flaring manes
 Those two great beasts rose upright like
 a man,
 Each gript a shoulder, and I stood
 between;
 And, when I would have smitten them,
 heard a voice,
 'Doubt not, go forward; if thou doubt,
 the beasts
 Will tear thee piecemeal.' Then with
 violence
 The sword was dash'd from out my hand,
 and fell.
 And up into the sounding hall I past;
 But nothing in the sounding hall I saw,
 No bench nor table, painting on the wall
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded
 moon
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
 But always in the quiet house I heard,
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost
 tower

To the eastward : up I climb'd a thousand
steps

With pain : as in a dream I seem'd to climb

For ever : at the last I reach'd a door,
A light was in the chamber, and I heard,
"Glory and joy and honour to our Lord
And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."

Then in my madness I essay'd the door ;
It gave ; and thro' a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seventimes-heated furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness that I swoon'd
away--

O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
All pall'd in crimson samite, and around
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings
and eyes.

And but for all my madness and my sin,
And then my swooning, I had sworn I
saw

That which I saw ; but what I saw was
veil'd!

And cover'd ; and this Quest was not for
me."

"Sospaking, and here ceasing, Lancelot left

The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—nay,
Brother, I need not tell thee foolish
words,—

A reckless and irreverent knight was he,
Now holden'd by the silence of his
King,—

Well, I will tell thee : "O King, my
liege," he said,

"Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of
thine ?

When have I stinted stroke in foughten
field ?

But as for thine, my good friend Percivale,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven men
mad,

Yea, some say mightiest wizard thou
art !"

But by some eyes, and by some ears I
swear,

I will be deafen'd than the blizzard of hell,
And thrice as blind as any mountain wolf,
To holy strings as their vibrations,
Hearfulsworn.

"Deafen'd," said the Christian King.

"Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows
Being too blind to have desire to see.

But if indeed there came a sign from
heaven,

Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale,
For these have seen according to their
sight.

For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,
When God made music thro' them, could
but speak

His music by the framework and the
chord ;

And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

"Nay—but thou earnest, Lancelot,
never yet

Couldst all of true god made in laugh and
men

Twine round one sin, whatever it might
be.

With such a closeness, but upon thine
grew,

Save that he were the swine that looked
of,

Some sort of brightness and pure nobility ;

Whereto see thou, that it may bear its
bliss.

"—And speak I must you truly, O my
king?—"

Was I too dark a prophet when I said
 To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
 That most of them would follow wan-
 dering fires,
 Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and
 gone,
 And left me gazing at a barren board,
 And a lean Order—scarce return'd a
 tithe—
 And out of those to whom the vision came
 My greatest hardly will believe he saw ;
 Another hath beheld it afar off,
 And leaving human wrongs to right them-
 selves,
 Cares but to pass into the silent life.
 And one hath had the vision face to face,
 And now his chair desires him here in
 vain,
 However they may crown him elsewhere.

“And some among you held, that if
 the King
 Had seen the sight he would have sworn
 the vow :
 Not easily, seeing that the King must
 guard
 That which he rules, and is but as the hind
 To whom a space of land is given to
 plough,
 Who may not wander from the allotted
 field
 Before his work be done ; but, being done,
 Let visions of the night or of the day
 Come, as they will ; and many a time
 they come,
 Until this earth he walks on seem- not
 earth,
 This light that strikes his eyeball is not
 light,
 This air that smites his forehead is not air
 But vision—yea, his very hand and foot—
 In moments when he feels he cannot die,
 And knows himself no vision to himself,

Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
 Who rose again : ye have seen what ye
 have seen.”

‘So spake the King : I knew not all
 he meant.’

PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill
 the gap
 Left by the Holy Quest ; and as he sat
 In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
 Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these a
 youth,
 Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields
 Past, and the sunshine came along with
 him.

‘Make me thy knight, because I know,
 Sir King,
 All that belongs to knighthood, and I love.’
 Such was his cry ; for having heard the
 King
 Had let proclaim a tournament—the prize
 A golden cirlet and a knightly sword,
 Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
 The golden cirlet, for himself the sword :
 And there were those who knew him near
 the King,
 And promised for him : and Arthur made
 him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the
 isles—
 But lately come to his inheritance,
 And lord of many a barren isle was he—
 Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
 Across the forest call'd of Dean, to find
 Caerleon and the King, had felt the sun
 Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and
 reel'd
 Almost to falling from his horse ; but saw

Near him a mound of even-sloping side,
Whercon a hundred stately bushes grew,
And here and there great hollies under
them;

But for a mile all round was open space,
And fern and heath: and slowly Pelleas
drew

To that dim day, then binding his good
horse

To a tree, cast himself down; and as he
lay

At random looking over the brown earth
Thro' that green-glooming twilight of the
grove,

It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern without
Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,
So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it.
Then o'er it crost the dimness of a cloud
Floating, and once the shadow of a bird
Flying, and then a fawn: and his eyes
closed.

And since he loved all maidens, but no
maid

In special, half-awake he whisper'd,
'Where?

O where? I love thee, tho' I know thee
not.

For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere,
And I will make thee with my spear and
sword

As famous—O my Queen, my Guinevere,
For I will be thine Arthur when we meet.'

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of talk
And laughter at the limit of the wood,
And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he
saw,

Strange as to some old prophet might
have seem'd

A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
Damsels in divers colours like the cloud
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them
On horses, and the horses richly trapt

Breast-high in that bright line of bracken
stood:

And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and one
that,

Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose.

And loosed his horse, and led him to the
light.

There she that seem'd the chief among
them said,

'In happy time behold our pilot-star!
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we ride,
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our way:
To right? to left? straight forward? back
again?

Which? tell us quickly.'

And Pelleas gazing thought,

'Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?'
For large her violet eyes look'd, and her
bloom

A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in woman-
hood:

And slender was her hand and small her
shape;

And but for those large eyes, the haughtiness
of scorn,

She might have seem'd a toy to trifle with,
And pass and care no more. But while
he gazed

The beauty of her flesh abash'd the boy,
As tho' it were the beauty of her soul:

For as the base man, judging of the good,
Puts his own baseness in him by default,
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
All the young beauty of his own soul to
hers,

Believing her: and when she spake to
him,

Stammer'd, and could not make her a
reply.

For out of the waste islands had he come,
Where saving his own sisters he had known
Scarce any but the women of his isles,
Rough wives, that laugh'd and scream'd
against the gulls,
Makers of nets, and living from the sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the lady
round

And look'd upon her people ; and as when
A stone is flung into some sleeping tarn,
The circle widens till it lip the marge,
Spread the slow smile thro' all her com-
pany.

Three knights were thereamong ; and they
too smiled,

Scorning him ; for the lady was Ettarre,
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, 'O wild and of the
woods,

Knowest thou not the fashion of our
speech?

Or have the Heavens but given thee a fair
face,

Lacking a tongue?'

'O damsel,' answer'd he,

'I woke from dreams ; and coming out
of gloom

Was dazzled by the sudden light, and
crave

Pardon : but will ye to Caerleon ? I
Go likewise : shall I lead you to the King?'

'Lead then,' she said ; and thro' the
woods they went.

And while they rode, the meaning in his
eyes,

His tenderness of manner, and chaste awe,
His broken utterances and bashfulness,

Were all a burthen to her, and in her heart
She mutter'd, 'I have lighted on a fool,
Raw, yet so stale !' But since her mind
was bent

On hearing, after trumpet blown, her name
And title, 'Queen of Beauty,' in the lists
Cried—and beholding him so strong, she
thought

That peradventure he will fight for me,
And win the circlet : therefore flatter'd
him,

Being so gracious, that he wellnigh deem'd
His wish by hers was echo'd ; and her
knights

And all her damsels too were gracious to
him,

For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd
Caerleon, ere they past to lodging, she,
Taking his hand, 'O the strong hand,'
she said,

'See ! look at mine ! but wilt thou fight
for me,

And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
That I may love thee?'

Then his helpless heart
Leapt, and he cried, 'Ay ! wilt thou if I
win?'

'Ay, that will I,' she answer'd, and she
laugh'd,

And straitly nipt the hand, and flung it
from her ;

Then glanced askew at those three knights
of hers,

Till all her ladies laugh'd along with her.

'O happy world,' thought Pelleas, 'all,
meseems,

Are happy ; I the happiest of them all.'
Nor slept that night for pleasure in his
blood,

And green wood-ways, and eyes among
the leaves;

Then lying on the morrow knighted,
swore

To love sincerely. And as he came away,
The men who met him rounded on their
heels.

And wonder'd after him, because his face
Shone like the countenance of a priest of
old

Against the flame about a sacrifice
Kindled by fire from heaven; so glad was
he.

Then Arthur made vast banquets, and
strange juggles

From the four winds came in: and each
one sat,

Tho' served with choice from air, land,
stream, and sea,

Oft in mid-banquet measuring with his
eyes

His neighbour's make and might: and
Pelleas look'd

Noble among the noble, for he dream'd
His lady loved him, and he knew himself

Loved of the King: and him his new-
made knight

Worshipt, whose lightest whisper moved
him more

Than all the ranged reasons of the world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning of
the jousts,

And this was call'd 'The Tournament of
Youth:'

For Arthur, loving his young knight,
withheld

His older and his mightier from the lists,
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's love,

According to her promise, and remain
lord of the tourney. And Arthur had the

jousts

Down in the flat field by the side of Lusk
Hadden; the jilted jousts were crown'd
With brass, and the good tower'd with
eyes

Up to the summit, and the trumpets blew.
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the
field

With honour: so by that strong hand of
his

The sword and golden circlet were
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved:
the heat

Of pride and glory fired her face; her eye
Sparkled; she caught the circlet from his
lance,

And there before the people crown'd
herself:

So for the last time she was gracious to
him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her look
Bright for all others, cloudier on her
knight—

Linger'd Ettarre: and seeing Pelleas
droop,

Said Guinevere, 'We marvel at thee
much,

O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
To him who won the glory!' And she
said,

'Had ye not held your Lancelot in your
bower,

My Queen, he had not won.' Whereat
the Queen,

As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and went
her way.

But after, when her damsels, and herself,
And these three knights all set their faces
home,

Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw him
cried,

'Damsels—and yet I should be shamed
to say it—

I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back
Among yourselves. Would rather that
we had

Some rough old knight who knew the
worldly way,

Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride
And jest with: take him to you, keep
him off,

And pamper him with papineat, if ye will.
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,
Such as the wholesome mothers tell their
boys.

Nay, should ye try him with a merry one
To find his mettle, good: and if he fly us,
Small matter! let him.' This her
damsels heard,

And mindful of her small and cruel hand,
They, closing round him thro' the journey
home,

Acted her hest, and always from her side
Restrain'd him with all manner of device,
So that he could not come to speech with
her.

And when she gain'd her castle, upsprang
the bridge,

Down rang the grate of iron thro' the
groove,

And he was left alone in open field.

'These be the ways of ladies,' Pelleas
thought,

'To those who love them, trials of our
faith.

Yea, let her prove me to the uttermost,
For loyal to the uttermost am I.'

So made his moan; and, darkness falling,
sought

A priory not far off, there lodged, but
rose

With morning every day, and, moist or
dry,

Full-arm'd upon his charger all day long
Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to him.

And this persistence turn'd her scorn to
wrath.

Then calling her three knights, she
charged them, 'Out!

And drive him from the walls.' And out
they came,

But Pelleas overthrew them as they dash'd
Against him one by one; and these
return'd,

But still he kept his watch beneath the
wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate; and
once,

A week beyond, while walking on the
walls

With her three knights, she pointed
downward, 'Look,

He haunts me—I cannot breathe—
besieges me;

Down! strike him! put my hate into
your strokes,

And drive him from my walls.' And
down they went,

And Pelleas overthrew them one by one;
And from the tower above him cried

Ettarre,

'Bind him, and bring him in.'

He heard her voice;

Then let the strong hand, which had
overthrown

Her minion-knights, by those he over-
threw

Be bounden straight, and so they brought
him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre, the
sight

Of her rich beauty made him at one glance
More bondsman in his heart than in his
bonds.

Yet with good cheer he spake, 'Behold
me, Lady.

A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will ;
And if thou keep me in thy denon here,
Content am I so that I see thy face.

But once a day : for I have sworn my
vows,

And thou hast given thy promise, and I
know

That all these pains are trials of my faith,
And that thyself, when thou hast seen me
strain'd

And sifted to the utmost, wilt at length
Yield me thy love and know me for thy
knight.'

Then she began to rail so bitterly,
With all her damsels, he was stricken
mute ;

But when she mock'd his vows and the
great King,

Lighted on words : 'For pity of thine
own self,

Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine and
mine ?'

'Thou fool,' she said, 'I never heard his
voice

But long'd to break away. Unbind him
now,

And thrust him out of doors ; for save
he be

Fool to the midmost marrow of his bones,
He will return no more.' And those, her
three,

Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust him
from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
She call'd them, saying, 'There he
watches yet.

There like a dog he looks in his master's denon.
Kith'd, he returns : do ye not know him,
ye ?

Ye know yourselves : how can ye hide an
yeater,

Attainted with his fulsome innocence ?
Are ye but creatures of the board and
bed,

No men to strike ? Fall on him all at
once,

And if ye slay him I reck not : if ye fail,
Give ye the slave mine order to be bound,
Bind him as heretofore, and bring him in :
It may be ye shall slay him in his bonds.'

She spake ; and at her will they couch'd
their spears.

Three against one : and Gawain passing
by,

Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
Low down beneath the shadow of those
towers

A villainy, three to one : and thro' his
heart

The fire of honour and all noble doct-
Flash'd, and he call'd, 'I strike upon thy
side—

The villain !' 'Nay,' said Pelleas, 'I am
forbear ;

He needs to ail who doth his lady's will.'

So Gawain, looking at the villainy done,
Forbore, but in his heart and eagerness
Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog, with
[uh]

A moment from the terror that he sees
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and
kill.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to
three ;

And they took up, and bound, and brought
him in.

Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,
burn'd
Full on her knights in many an evil name
Of craven, weaking, and thrice-beaten
hound :
'Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit to
touch,
Far less to bind, your victor, and thrust
him out,
And let who will release him from his
bonds.
And if he comes again'—there she brake
short ;
And Pelleas answer'd, 'Lady, for indeed
I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful,
I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd
Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not,
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn :
I had liefer ye were worthy of my love,
Than to be loved again of you—farewell ;
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love,
Vex not yourself : ye will not see me
more.'

While thus he spake, she gazed upon
the man
Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and
thought,
'Why have I push'd him from me? this
man loves,
If love there be : yet him I loved not.
Why?
I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that in him
A something—was it nobler than my-
self?—
Seem'd my reproach? He is not of my
kind.
He could not love me, did he know me
well.
Nay, let him go—and quickly.' And her
knights
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out
of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him
from his bonds,
And flung them o'er the walls ; and after-
ward,
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag,
'Faith of my body,' he said, 'and art
thou not—
Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur
made
Knight of thy table ; yea and he that won
The circlet? wherefore hast thou so
defamed
Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,
As let these caitiffs on thee work their
will?'

And Pelleas answer'd, 'O, their wills
are hers
For whom I won the circlet ; and mine.
hers,
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,
Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery
now,
Other than when I found her in the
woods ;
And tho' she hath me bounden but in
spite,
And all to flout me, when they bring me
in,
Let me be bounden, I shall see her face ;
Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness.'

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in
scorn,
'Why, let my lady bind me if she will,
And let my lady beat me if she will :
But an she send her delegate to thrall
These fighting hands of mine—Christ kill
me then
But I will slice him handless by the wrist,
And let my lady sear the stump for him,
Howl as he may. But hold me for your
friend :

Count, ye know nothing : here I pledge
my troth,

Yea, by the honour of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tane thy jailing princess to thine
hand.

Lead me thine horse and arms, and I will
say

That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall ;
Then, when I come within her counsels,
then

From prime to vespers will I chant thy
praise

As prowest knight and truest lover, more
Than any have sung thee living, till she
long

To have thee back in lusty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonds
and warm,

Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now
thy horse

And armour : let me go : be comforted :
Give me three days to melt her fancy,
and hope

The third night hence will bring thee
news of gold.

Then Pelleas lent his horse and all his
arms,

Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and
took

Gawain's, and said, ' Betray me not, but
help—

Art thou not he whom men call light-of-
love ?'

' Ay,' said Gawain, ' for women be so
light.'

Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
And raised a bugle hanging from his neck,

And winded it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall

Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-
tide.

Upon a score of damocls to the tower,
' Avaunt,' they cried, ' our lady loves thee
not.'

But Gawain lifting up his vizor said,
' Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye
hate :

Behold his horse and armour. Open
gates,

And I will make you merry.'

And down they ran,
Her damscels, crying to their lady, ' Lo !
Pelleas is dead—he told us—he that hath
His horse and armour : will ye let him in ?
He slew him ! Gawain, Gawain of the
court,

Sir Gawain—there he waits below the
wall,

Blowing his bugle as who should say him
nay.'

And so, leave given, straight on thro'
open door

Rode Gawain, whom she greeted cour-
teously.

' Dead, is it so ?' she ask'd. ' Ay, ay,'
said he,

' And oft in dying cried upon your name.'
' Dry on lass,' she answer'd. ' A good
knight,

But never let me bid you both at parting.'
' Ay, though,' Gawain, ' and you be fair
enow :

But I to your den's sake have given my
troth,

That whom ye loathe, him will I make you
love.'

So thence three days, sturless sturth, he
went.

Lost in a slumber, Pelleas wandering
 Waited, until the third night brought a
 moon
 With promise of large light on woods and
 ways.

Hot was the night and silent ; but a
 sound
 Of Gawain ever coming, and this lay—
 Which Pelleas had heard sung before the
 Queen,
 And seen her sadden listening—veer his
 heart,
 And marr'd his rest—‘ A worm within the
 rose.’

‘ A rose, but one, none other rose had I,
 A rose, one rose, and this was wondrous
 fair,
 One rose, a rose that gladden'd earth and
 sky,
 One rose, my rose, that sweeten'd all mine
 air—
 I cared not for the thorns ; the thorns
 were there.

‘ One rose, a rose to gather by and by,
 One rose, one rose, to gather and to
 wear,
 No rose but one—what other rose had I?
 One rose, my rose ; a rose that will not
 die,—
 He dies who loves it,—if the worm be
 there.’

This tender rhyme, and evermore the
 doubt,
 ‘ Why lingers Gawain with his golden
 news ?’
 So shook him that he could not rest, but
 rode
 Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his
 horse

Hard by the gates. Wide open were the
 gates,
 And no watch kept ; and in thro' these
 he past,
 And heard but his own steps, and his own
 heart
 Beating, for nothing moved but his own
 self,
 And his own shadow. Then he crost the
 court,
 And spied not any light in hall or bower,
 But saw the postern portal also wide
 Yawning ; and up a slope of garden, all
 Of roses white and red, and brambles mixt
 And overgrowing them, went on, and
 found,
 Here too, all hush'd below the mellow
 moon,
 Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
 Came lightening downward, and so spilt
 itself
 Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware of three pavilions
 rear'd
 Above the bushes, gilden-peakt : in one,
 Red after revel, droned her lurdane
 knights
 Slumbering, and their three squires across
 their feet :
 In one, their malice on the placid lip
 Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsels
 lay :
 And in the third, the circlet of the jousts
 Bound on her brow, were Gawain and
 Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the
 leaf
 To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew :
 Back, as a coward slinks from what he
 fears
 To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound

Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
 Creep with his shadow thro' the court
 again,
 Fingering at his sword-handle until he
 stood
 There on the castle-bridge once more, and
 thought,
 'I will go back, and slay them where they
 lie.'

And so went back, and seeing them yet
 in sleep
 Said, 'Ye, that so dishallow the holy
 sleep,
 Your sleep is death,' and drew the sword,
 and thought,
 'What! slay a sleeping knight? the King
 hath bound
 And sworn me to this brotherhood;'—
 again,
 'Alas that ever a knight should be so
 false.'
 Then turn'd, and so return'd, and groan-
 ing laid
 The naked sword athwart their naked
 throats,
 There left it, and them sleeping; and she
 lay,
 The circlet of the tourney round her
 brows,
 And the sword of the tourney across her
 throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on
 his horse
 stared at her towers that, larger than
 themselves
 In their own darkness, throng'd into the
 moon.
 Then crush'd the saddle with his thighs,
 and clench'd
 His hands, and madden'd with himself
 and moan'd:

'Would they have risen against me in
 their blood
 At the last day? I might have answer'd
 them
 Even before high God. O towers so
 strong,
 Huge, solid, would that even while I gaze
 The crack of earthquake shivering to your
 base
 Split you, and Hell burst up your harlot
 roofs
 Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and thro'
 within,
 Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as a
 skull!
 Let the fierce east scream thro' your eyelet-
 holes,
 And whirl the dust of harlots round and
 round
 In dung and nettles! hiss, snake—I saw
 him there—
 Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell. Who
 yells
 Here in the still sweet summer night, but
 I—
 I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her
 fool?
 Fool, beast—he, she, or I? myself most
 fool;
 Beast too, as lacking human will—dis-
 grace!
 Dishonour'd all for trial of true love—
 Love?—we be all alike: only the King
 Hath made us fools and liars. O noble
 vows!
 O great and same and simple race of brutes
 That own no lust because they have no
 law!
 For why should I have loved her to my
 shame?
 I loathe her, as I loved her to my shame.
 I never loved her, I but hunted for her—
 Away—'

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro' the
night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on
her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd
herself

To Gawain: 'Liar, for thou hast not slain
This Pelleas! here he stood, and might
have slain

Me and thyself.' And he that tells the tale
Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on
earth,

And only lover; and thro' her love her
life

Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the
night,

And over hard and soft, striking the sod
From out the soft, the spark from off the
hard,

Rode till the star above the wakening sun,
Beside that tower where Percivale was
cowl'd,

Glanced from the rosy forehead of the
dawn.

For so the words were flash'd into his
heart

He knew not whence or wherefore: 'O
sweet star,

Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn!
And there he would have wept, but felt
his eyes

Harder and drier than a fountain bed
In summer: thither came the village girls
And linger'd talking, and they come no
more

Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it from
the heights

Again with living waters in the change

Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his
heart

Seem'd; but so weary were his limbs,
that he,

Gasping, 'Of Arthur's hall am I, but
here,

Here let me rest and die,' cast himself
down,

And gulf'd his griefs in inmost sleep; so
lay,

Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain fired
The hall of Merlin, and the morning star
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame,
and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some one
nigh,

Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,
crying,

'False! and I held thee pure as Guine-
vere.'

But Percivale stood near him and
replied,

'Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or being
one

Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard
That Lancelot?—there he check'd him-
self and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as with
one

Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
That made it plunges thro' the wound
again,

And pricks it deeper: and he shrank and
wail'd,

Is the Queen false?' and Percivale was
mute.

'Have any of our Round Table held their
vows?'

And Percivale made answer not a word.

'Is the King true?' 'The King!' said
Percivale.

'Why then let men couple at once with
wolves.

What! art thou mad?'

But Pelleas, leaping up,

Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his
horse

And fled: small pity upon his horse had
he,

Or on himself, or any, and when he met
A cripple, one that held a hand for alms—
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-
elm

That turns its back on the salt blast, the
boy

Paused not, but overrode him, shouting,
'False,

And false with Gawain!' and so left him
bruised

And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and
wood

Went ever streaming by him till the
gloom,

That follows on the turning of the world,
Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd
the reins,

And made his beast that better knew it,
swerve

Now off it and now on; but when he saw
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin
built,

Blackening against the dead-green stripes
of even,

'Black nest of rats,' he groan'd, 'ye build
too high.'

Not long thereafter from the city gates
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,
Warm with a gracious parting from the
Queen,

Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star

And marvelling what it was: on whom
the boy,

Across the silent seeded meadow-grass
Borne, dash'd: and Lancelot, saying,

'What name hast thou

That ridest here so blindly and so hard?'

'I have no name,' he shouted, 'a scoundrel
am I,

To lash the treasons of the Table Round.'

'Yea, but thy name?' 'I have many
names,' he cried:

'I am wrath and shame and hate and evil
fame,

And like a poisonous wind I pass to
blast

And blaze the crime of Lancelot and the
Queen.'

'First over me,' said Lancelot, 'shalt
thou pass.'

'Fight therefore,' yell'd the other, and
either knight

Drew back a space, and when they closed,
at once

The weary steed of Pelleas floundering
flung

His rider, who call'd out from the dark
field,

'Thou art false as Hell: slay me: I have
no sword.'

Then Lancelot, 'Yea, between thy life
and sleep:

But here will I disedge it by thy death.'

'Slay then,' he shriek'd, 'my will is to be
slain.'

And Lancelot, with his heel upon the
fall'n,

Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then
spake:

'Rise, weakling: I am Lancelot; say thy
say.'

And Lancelot slowly rode his warhorse
back

To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief while
 Caught his unbroken limbs from the dark
 field,
 And follow'd to the city. It chanced that
 both
 Brake into hall together, worn and pale.
 There with her knights and dames was
 Guinevere.
 Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot
 So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,
 him
 Who had not greeted her, but cast him-
 self
 Down on a bench, hard-breathing. 'Have
 ye fought?'
 She ask'd of Lancelot. 'Ay, my Queen,'
 he said.
 'And thou hast overthrown him?' 'Ay,
 my Queen.'
 Then she, turning to Pelleas, 'O young
 knight,
 Hath the great heart of knighthood in
 thee fail'd
 So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,
 A fall from him?' Then, for he answer'd
 not,
 'Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the
 Queen,
 May help them, loose thy tongue, and let
 me know.'
 But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
 She quail'd; and he, hissing 'I have no
 sword,'
 Sprang from the door into the dark.
 The Queen
 Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her;
 And each foresaw the dolorous day to
 be:
 And all talk died, as in a grove all song
 Beneath the shadow of some bird of prey;
 Then a long silence came upon the hall,
 And Modred thought, 'The time is hard
 at hand.'

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in his
 mood
 Had made mock-knight of Arthur's
 Table Round,
 At Camelot, high above the yellowing
 woods,
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the hall.
 And toward him from the hall, with harp
 in hand,
 And from the crown thereof a carcanet
 Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
 Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
 Came Tristram, saying, 'Why skip ye
 so, Sir Fool?'

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding once
 Far down beneath a winding wall of rock
 Heard a child wail. A stump of oak
 half-dead,
 From roots like some black coil of carven
 snakes,
 Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'
 mid air
 Bearing an eagle's nest: and thro' the tree
 Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the
 wind
 Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag and
 tree
 Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the perilous
 nest,
 This ruby necklace thrice around her neck,
 And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,
 brought
 A maiden babe; which Arthur pitying
 took,
 Then gave it to his Queen to rear: the
 Queen
 But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms
 Received, and after loved it tenderly,
 And named it Nestling so forgot herself

A moment, and her cares ; till that young
life

Being smitten in mid heaven with mortal
sail

Past from her ; and in time the carcanet
Vext her with plaintive memories of the
child :

So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,
'Take thou the jewels of this dead in-
nocence,

And make them, an thou wilt, a tourney-
prize.'

To whom the King, 'Peace to thine
eagle-borne

Dead nestling, and this honour after death,
Following thy will ! but, O my Queen,
I muse

Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or
zone

Those diamonds that I rescued from the
tarn,

And Lancelot won, methought, for thee
to wear.'

'Would rather you had let them fall,'
she cried,

'Plunge and be lost—ill-fated as they
were,

A bitterness to me !—ye look amazed,
Not knowing they were lost as soon as
given—

Slid from my hands, when I was leaning
out

Above the river—that unhappy child
Fest in her barge : but rosier luck will go
With these rich jewels, seeing that they
came

Not from the skeleton of a brother-slayer,
But the sweet body of a maiden babe.

Perchance—who knows?—the purest of
thy knights

May win them for the purest of my maids.'

Slawencel, and the cry of a great jousts
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the
ways

From Camelot in among the fabled fields
To furthest towers ; and everywhere the
knights

Arm'd for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud morn
Into the hall stagger'd, his visage ribb'd
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his
nose

Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one hand
off,

And one with shatter'd fingers dangling
lame,

A churl, to whom indignantly the King,

'My churl, for whom Christ died, what
evil beast

Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face ?
or fiend ?

Man was it who marr'd heaven's image
in thee thus ?'

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of
splinter'd teeth,

Yet strangers to the tongue, and with
blunt stump

Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the
maim'd churl,

'He took them and he drave them to
his tower—

Some hold he was a table-knight of thine—
A hundred goodly ones—the Red Knight,
he—

Loth, I was tending swine, and the Red
Knight

Brake in upon me and drave them to his
tower :

And when I call'd upon thy name as one
That doest right by gentle and by churl.

Maim'd me and maul'd, and would out-
right have slain,
Save that he sware me to a message,
saying,
"Tell thou the King and all his liars,
that I
Have founded my Round Table in the
North,
And whatsoever his own knights have
sworn
My knights have sworn the counter to
it—and say
My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves—and
say
My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess
To be none other; and say his hour is
come,
The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the sene-
schal,
"Take thou my churl, and tend him
curiously
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be
whole.
The heathen—but that ever-climbing
wave,
Hurl'd back again so often in empty foam,
Hath lain for years at rest—and renegades,
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion,
whom
The wholesome realm is purged of other-
where,
Friends, thro' your manhood and your
falty,—now
Make their last head like Satan in the
North.
My younger knights, new-made, in whom
your flower

Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling,
which achieved,
The loneliest ways are safe from shore to
shore.
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the field;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to mingle
with it,
Only to yield my Queen her own again?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it
well?"

Thereto Sir Lancelot answer'd, "It is
well:
Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to me.
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is well."

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot follow'd
him,
And while they stood without the doors,
the King
Turn'd to him saying, "Is it then so well?
Or mine the blame that oft I seem as he
Of whom was written, "A sound is in his
ears"?"
The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the
glance
That only seems half-loyal to command,—
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-
ence—
Or have I dream'd the bearing of our
knights
Tells of a manhood ever less and lower?
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,
uprear'd,
By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
From flat confusion and brute violences,
Reel back into the beast, and be no
more?"

He spoke, and taking all his younger
knights,

Down the slope city rode, and sharply
 turn'd
 North by the gate. In her high bower
 the Queen,
 Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
 Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not that
 she sigh'd.
 Then ran across her memory the strange
 rhyme
 Of bygone Merlin, 'Where is he who
 knows?
 From the great deep to the great deep he
 goes.'

But when the morning of a tournament,
 By these in earnest those in mockery call'd
 The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,
 Round whose sick head all night, like
 birds of prey,
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd, arose,
 And down a streetway hung with folds of
 pure
 White samite, and by fountains running
 wine,
 Where children sat in white with cups of
 gold,
 Moved to the lists, and there, with slow
 sad steps
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd
 chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of their
 Queen
 White-robed in honour of the stainless
 child,
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a
 bank
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of
 fire.
 He look'd but once, and vail'd his eyes
 again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a
 dream
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began :
 And ever the wind blew, and yellowing
 leaf
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and
 shorn plume
 Went down it. Sighing wearily, as one
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
 When all the goodlier guests are past
 away,
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the
 lists.
 He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
 Broken, but spake not; once, a knight
 cast down
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed
 The dead babe and the follies of the King ;
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its hole,
 Modred, a narrow face : anon he heard
 The voice that billow'd round the barriers
 roar
 An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,
 And armour'd all in forest green, whereon
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
 And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
 With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—late
 From overseas in Brittany return'd,
 And marriage with a princess of that realm,
 Isot the White—Sir Tristram of the
 Woods—
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime
 with pain
 His own against him, and now yearn'd to
 shake
 The burthen off his heart in one full shock
 With Tristram ev'n to death: his strong
 hands gript
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,

Until he groan'd for wrath—so many of
 those,
 That ware their ladies' colours on the
 casque,
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the
 bounds,
 And there with gibes and flickering
 mockeries
 Stood, while he mutter'd, 'Craven crests!
 O shame!
 What faith have these in whom they swear
 to love?
 The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave,
 the gems,
 Not speaking other word than 'Hast thou
 won?
 Art thou the purest, brother? See, the
 hand
 Wherewith thou takest this, is red!' to
 whom
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's
 languorous mood,
 Made answer, 'Ay, but wherefore toss
 me this
 Like a dry bone cast to some hungry hound?
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy. Strength
 of heart
 And might of limb, but mainly use and
 skill,
 Are winners in this pastime of our King.
 My hand—belike the lance hath dript
 upon it—
 No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief
 knight,
 Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,
 Great brother, thou nor I have made the
 world;
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine.'

And Tri-stram round the gallery made
 his horse

Caracole; then bow'd his homage, bluntly
 saying,
 'Fair damsels, each to him who worships
 each
 Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
 This day my Queen of Beauty is not here.'
 And most of these were mute, some anger'd,
 one
 Murmuring, 'All courtesy is dead,' and
 one,
 'The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and
 mantle clung,
 And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
 Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
 But under her black brows a swarthy one
 Laugh'd shrilly, crying, 'Praise the patient
 saints,
 Our one white day of Innocence hath past,
 Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt. So
 be it.
 The snowdrop only, flowering thro' the
 year,
 Would make the world as blank as
 Winter-tide.
 Come—let us gladden their sad eyes, our
 Queen's
 And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity
 With all the kindlier colours of the field.'

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the
 feast
 Variously gay: for he that tells the tale
 Liken'd them, saying, as when an hour of
 cold
 Falls on the mountain in midsummer
 snows,
 And all the purple slopes of mountain
 flowers
 Pass under white, till the warm hour
 returns

With veer of wind, and all are flowers
again;

So dame and damsel cast the simple white,
And glowing in all colours, the live grass,
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy,
glanced

About the revels, and with mirth so loud
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the
Queen,

And wroth at Tristram and the lawless
jousts,

Brake up their sports, then slowly to her
bower

Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow
morn,

High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the hall.

Then Tristram saying, 'Why skip ye so,
Sir Fool?'

Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet
replied,

'Belike for lack of wiser company;
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit
Makes the world rotten, why, belike I skip
To know myself the wisest knight of all.'

'Ay, fool,' said Tristram, 'but 'tis eating
dry

To dance without a catch, a roundelay
To dance to.' Then he twangled on his
harp,

And while he twangled little Dagonet
stood,

Quiet as any water-sodden log
Stay'd in the wandering warble of a brook;
But when the twangling ended, skipt
again;

And being ask'd, 'Why skipt ye not, Sir
Fool?'

Made answer, 'I had liefer twenty years
Skip to the broken music of my brains
Than any broken music thou canst make.'

Then Tristram, waiting for the quip to
come,

'Good now, what music have I broken,
fool?'

And little Dagonet, skipping, 'Arthur,
the King's;

For when thou playest that air with Queen
Isolt,

Thou makest broken music with thy bricé,
Her daintier namesake down in Brittany—
And so thou breakest Arthur's music
too.'

'Save for that broken music in thy brains,
Sir Fool,' said Tristram, 'I would break
thy head.

Fool, I came late, the heathen wars were
o'er,

The life had flown, we sware but by the
shell—

I am but a fool to reason with a fool—
Come, thou art crabb'd and sour; but
lean me down,

Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,
And harken if my music be not true.

'Free love—free field—we love but
while we may:

The woods are hush'd, their music is no
more:

The leaf is dead, the yearning past away:
New leaf, new life—the days of frost are
o'er:

New life, new love, to suit the newer day:
New loves are sweet as those that went
before:

Free love—free field—we love but while
we may."

'Ye might have moved slow-measure
to my tune,

Not stood stockstill. I made it in the
woods,

And heard it ring as true as tested gold.'

But Dagonet with one foot poised in
his hand,
'Friend, did ye mark that fountain
yesterday
Made to run wine?—but this had run
itself
All out like a long life to a sour end—
And them that round it sat with golden
cups
To hand the wine to whosoever came—
The twelve small damosels white as
Innocence,
In honour of poor Innocence the babe,
Who left the gems which Innocence the
Queen
Lent to the King, and Innocence the King
Gave for a prize—and one of those white
slips
Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one,
"Drink, drink, Sir Fool," and thereupon
I drank,
Spat -pish—the cup was gold, the
draught was mud.'

And Tristram, 'Was it muddier than
thy gibes?
Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?—
Not marking how the knighthood mock
thee, fool—
'Fear God : honour the King—his one
true knight—
Sole follower of the vows"—for here be
they
Who knew thee swine enow before I came,
Smuttier than blasted grain : but when
the King
Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up
It frightened all free fool from out thy
heart ;
Which left thee less than fool, and less
than swine,
A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee
still,

For I have flung thee pearls and find thee
swine.'

And little Dagonet mincing with his
feet,
'Knight, an ye fling those rubies round
my neck
In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast some
touch
Of music, since I care not for thy pearls.
Swine? I have wallow'd, I have wash'd
—the world
In flesh and shadow—I have had my
day.
The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind
Hath foul'd me—an I wallow'd, then I
wash'd—
I have had my day and my philosophies—
And thank the Lord I am King Arthur's
fool.
Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses, rams
and geese
Troop'd round a Paynim harper once,
who thrumm'd
On such a wire as musically as thou
Some such fine song—but never a king's
fool.'

And Tristram, 'Then were swine,
goats, asses, geese
The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard
Had such a mastery of his mystery
That he could harp his wife up out of hell.'

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of
his foot,
'And whither harp'st thou thine? down!
and thyself
Down! and two more : a helpful harper
thou,
That harpest downward! Dost thou know
the star
We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven?'

And Tristram, 'Ay, Sir Fool, for when
our King
Was victor wellnigh day by day, the
knights,
Glorying in each new glory, set his name
High on all hills, and in the signs of
heaven.'

And Dagonet answer'd, 'Ay, and
when the land
Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set
yourself
To babble about him, all to show your
wit—
And whether he were King by courtesy,
Or King by right—and so went harping
down
The black king's highway, got so far,
and grew
So witty that ye play'd at ducks and drakes
With Arthur's vows on the great lake of
fire.
Tuwhoo ! do ye see it ? do ye see the star ?'

'Nay, fool,' said Tristram, 'not in
open day.'
And Dagonet, 'Nay, nor will : I see it
and hear.
It makes a silent music up in heaven,
And I, and Arthur and the angels hear,
And then we skip.' 'Lay, fool,' he said,
'ye talk
Fool's treason : is the King thy brother
fool ?'
Then little Dagonet clapt his hands and
shrill'd,
'Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of fools !
Conceits himself as God that he can make
Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles, milk
From burning spurge, honey from hornet-
combs,
And men from beasts—Long live the king
of fools !'

And down the city Dagonet danced
away ;
But thro' the slowly-mellowing avenues
And solitary passages of the wood
Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and
the west.
Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
With ruby-circled neck, but evermore
Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
For all that walk'd, or crept, or perch'd,
or flew.
Anon the face, as, when a gust hath blown,
Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
Of one that in them sees himself, return'd ;
But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to lawn
Thro' many a league-long bower he rode.
At length
A lodge of intertwisted beechen-boughs
Furze-cramm'd, and bracken-rooft, the
which himself
Built for a summer day with Queen Isolt
Against a shower, dark in the golden grove
Appearing, sent his fancy back to where
She lived a moon in that low lodge with
him :
Till Mark her lord had past, the Cornish
king,
With six or seven, when Tristram was
away,
And snatch'd her thence ; yet dreading
worse than shame
Her warrise Tristram, spoke not any
word,
But look'd his hum, doying wretchedness.

And now that desert lodge to Tristram
lookt
So sweet, that halting, in he past, and
sank

Down on a drift of foliage random-blown ;
But could not rest for musing how to
smoothe

And sleek his marriage over to the Queen.
Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all
The tonguesters of the court she had not
heard.

But then what folly had sent him overseas
After she left him lonely here ? a name ?
Was it the name of one in Brittany,
Isolt, the daughter of the King ? ' Isolt
Of the white hands ' they call'd her : the
sweet name

Allured him first, and then the maid her-
self,

Who served him well with those white
hands of hers,

And loved him well, until himself had
thought

He loved her also, wedded easily,
But left her all as easily, and return'd.

The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes
Had drawn him home—what marvel ?
then he laid

His brows upon the drifted leaf and
dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brittany
Between Isolt of Britain and his bride,
And show'd them both the ruby-chain,
and both

Began to struggle for it, till his Queen
Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was
red.

Then cried the Breton, ' Look, her hand
is red !

These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,
And melts within her hand—her hand is
hot

With ill desires, but this I gave thee,
look,

Is all as cool and white as any flower.'
Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings, and then

A whimpering of the spirit of the child,
Because the twain had spoil'd her car-
canet.

He dream'd ; but Arthur with a hun-
dred spears

Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,
And many a glancing splash and sallowy isle,
The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty
marsh

Glared on a huge machicolated tower
That stood with open doors, whereout
was roll'd

A roar of riot, as from men secure
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their ease
Among their harlot-brides, an evil song.

' Lo there,' said one of Arthur's youth,
for there,

High on a grim dead tree before the
tower,

A goodly brother of the Table Round
Swung by the neck : and on the bough
a shield

Showing a shower of blood in a field noir,
And therebeside a horn, inflamed the
knights

At that dishonour done the gilded spur,
Till each would clash the shield, and blow
the horn.

But Arthur waved them back. Alone he
rode.

Then at the dry harsh roar of the great
horn,

That sent the face of all the marsh aloft
An ever upward-rushing storm and cloud
Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight
heard, and all,

Even to tipmost lance and topmost helm,
In blood-red armour sallying, howl'd to
the King,

' The teeth of Hell flay bare and gnash
thee flat !—

Lo! art thou not that cannoh-hearted
King

Who from had elipt free manhood from
the world—

The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's
curse, and I!

Slain was the brother of my paramour
by a knight of thine, and I that heard
her whine

And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,
Swore by the scorpion-worm that twines
in hell,

And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I fought
And tumble. Art thou King?—Look
to thy life!

He ended: Arthur knew the voice: the
face

Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the
name

Went wandering somewhere darkling in
his mind.

And Arthur sign'd not use of word or
sword,

but let the drunkard, as he stretch'd from
horse

To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the
swamp

Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching
wave,

Heard in dead night along that table-
shore,

Drops flat, and after the great waters
break

Whitening for half a league, and thin
themselves,

Far over sands marbled with moon and
cloud,

From less and less to nothing; thus he fell
Head-heavy: then the knights, who
watch'd him, rostr'd

And slanted and leapt down upon the
fall'n;

There trampled out his face from being
known,

And sank his head in mire, and slimed
themselves:

Not heard the King for their own crime,
but sprang

Thro' open doors, and swording right and
left

Men, women, on their sudden faces,
hurl'd

The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
And all the pavement stream'd with
massacre:

Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired
the tower,

Which half that autumn night, like the
live North,

Keel-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,
Made all above it, and a hundred metres

Above it, as the water March saw

Come round by the East, and out beyond
them flush'd

The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore to
shore,

But in the heart of Arthur's park was lost

Then, out of Tristram waking, the red
demon

Fled with a shout, and that low lodge
return'd,

Mid-forest, and the wind among the
boughs,

He whistled his good warhorse left in
grace

Among the forest greens, vaulted upon him,
And rode beneath an ever-showering leaf,
Till one lone woman, weeping near a
cross,

Stay'd him. 'Why weep ye?' 'Lord,'
 she said, 'my man
 Hath left me or is dead;' whereon he
 thought—
 'What, if she hate me now? I would
 not this.
 What, if she love me still? I would not
 that.
 I know not what I would'—but said to
 her,
 'Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate
 return,
 He find thy favour changed and love thee
 not'—
 Then pressing day by day thro' Lyonesse
 Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard
 The hounds of Mark, and felt the goodly
 hounds
 Yelp at his heart, but turning, past and
 gain'd
 Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,
 A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
 A low sea-sunset glorying round her hair
 And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the
 Queen.
 And when she heard the feet of Tristram
 grind
 The spiring stone that scaled about her
 tower,
 Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,
 and there
 Belted his body with her white embrace,
 Crying aloud, 'Not Mark—not Mark,
 my soul!
 The footstep flutter'd me at first: not he:
 Catlike thro' his own castle steals my
 Mark,
 But warrior-wise thou stridest thro' his
 halls
 Who hates thee, as I him—ev'n to the
 death.

My soul, I felt my hatred for my Mark
 Quickened within me, and knew that thou
 wert nigh.'
 To whom Sir Tristram smiling, 'I am
 here.
 Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine.'

And drawing somewhat backward she
 replied,
 'Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his
 own,
 But save for dread of thee had beaten me,
 Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me
 somehow—Mark?
 What rights are his that dare not strike
 for them?
 Not lift a hand—not, tho' he found me
 thus!
 But harken! have ye met him! hence he
 went
 To-day for three days' hunting—as he
 said—
 And so returns belike within an hour.
 Mark's way, my soul!—but eat not thou
 with Mark,
 Because he hates thee even more than
 fears;
 Nor drink: and when thou passest any
 wood
 Close vizer, lest an arrow from the bush
 Should leave me all alone with Mark and
 hell.
 My God, the measure of my hate for Mark
 Is as the measure of my love for thee.'

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one
 by love,
 Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and
 spake
 To Tristram, as he knelt before her,
 saying,
 'O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
 Harper, and thou hast been a rover too,

For, ere I mated with my shambling king,
Ye twain had fallen out about the bride—
Of one—his name is out of me—the prize,
If prize she were—(what marvel—she
could see)—

Thine, friend; and ever since my craven
seeks

To wreck thee villainously; but, O Sir
Knight,

What dame or damsel have ye kneel'd to
last?'

And Tristram, 'Last to my Queen
Paramount,

Here now to my Queen Paramount of Love
And loveliness—ay, lovelier than when
first

Her light feet fell on our rough Lyonesse,
Sailing from Ireland.'

Softly laugh'd Isolt;

'Flatter me not, for hath not our great
Queen

My sole of beauty trebled?' and he said,
'Her beauty is her beauty, and thine thine,
And thine is more to me—soft, gracious,
kind—

Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy lips
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n to
him,

Lancelot; for I have seen him wan enow
To make one doubt if ever the great Queen
Have yielded him her love.'

To whom Isolt,

'Ah then, false hunter and false harper,
thou

Who brakest thro' the scruple of my
bond,

Calling me thy white hind, and saying to
me

That Guinevere had sinn'd against the
highest,

And I—misjoked with such a want of
man—

That I could hardly sin against the lowest.'

He answer'd, 'O my soul, be com-
forted!

If this be sweet, to sin in leading strings,
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,

Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning
sin

That made us happy: but how ye greet
me—fear

And fault and doubt—no word of that
fond tale—

Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet
memories

Of Tristram in that year he was away.'

And, saddening on the sudden, spake
Isolt,

'I had forgotten all in my strong joy
To see thee—yearnings?—ay! for, hour
by hour,

Here in the never-ended afternoon,
O sweeter than all memories of thee,
Deeper than any yearnings after thee
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-
smiling seas.

Watch'd from this tower. Isolt of Britain
dash'd

Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
Would that have chill'd her bride-kiss?
Wedded her?

Fought in her father's battles? wounded
there?

The King was all fulfill'd with gladness,
And she, my namesake of the hands, that
heal'd

Thy hurt and heat with urgent and
care—

Well—can I wish her any larger wrong
Than having known thee? her too last
thou left

To pine and waste in those sweet memories.

O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men
Are noble, I should hate thee more than
love.'

And Tristram, fondling her light hands,
replied,

'Grace, Queen, for being loved: she
loved me well.

Did I love her? the name at least I loved.
Isolt?—I fought his battles, for Isolt!
The night was dark; the true star set.
Isolt!

The name was ruler of the dark—Isolt?
Care not for her!' patient, and prayerful,
meek,

Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to
God.'

And Isolt answer'd, 'Yea, and why
not I?

Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,
Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell
thee now.

Here one black, mute midsummer night
I sat,

Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering
where,

Murmuring a light song I had heard thee
sing,

And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.
Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near me
stood,

In fuming sulphur blue and green, a
fiend—

Mark's way to steal behind one in the
dark—

For there was Mark: "He has wedded
her," he said,

Not said, but hiss'd it: then this crown of
towers

So shook to such a roar of all the sky,

That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,
And woke again in utter dark, and cried,
"I will flee hence and give myself to
God"—

And thou wert lying in thy new leman's
arms.'

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her
hand,

'May God be with thee, sweet, when old
and gray,

And past desire!' a saying that anger'd her.
"May God be with thee, sweet, when
thou art old,

And sweet no more to me!" I need
Him now.

For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so
gross

Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the
mast?

The greater man, the greater courtesy.

Far over was the Tristram, Arthur's
knight!

But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild
beasts—

Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance
Becomes thee well—art grown wild beast
thyself.

How darest thou, if lover, push me even
In fancy from thy side, and set me far
In the gray distance, half a life away,
Her to be loved no more? Unsay it,
unswear!

Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
Broken with Mark and hate and solitude.
Thy marriage and mine own, that I should
suck

Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.
Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye
kneel,

And solemnly as when ye sware to him,
The man of men, our King—My God
the power

Was once in vows when men believed the
King!

They lied not then, who swore, and thro'
their vows

The King prevailing made his realm :—
I say.

Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n when
old,

Gray-hair'd, and past desire, and in des-
pair.'

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up and
down,

'Vows! did you keep the vow you made
to Mark

More than I mine? Lied, say ye? Nay,
but learnt,

The vow that binds too strictly snaps
itself—

My knighthood taught me this—ay, being
snapt—

We run more counter to the soul thereof
Than had we never sworn. I swear no
more.

I swore to the great King, and am for-
sworn.

For once—ev'n to the height—I honour'd
him.

"Man, is he man at all?" methought,
when first

I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and
beheld

That victor of the Pagan throned in hall—
His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a brow

Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-
blue eyes,

The golden beard that clothed his lips
with light—

Moreover, that weird legend of his birth,
With Merlin's mystic babble about his end

Amazed me; then, his foot was on a stool
Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me no

man,

But Michael trampling Satan; so I swore,
Being amazed: but thou wert by—The
vows!

O ay—the wholesome mightiness of an
hour—

They served their use, their time; for
every knight

Believed himself a greater than himself,
And every follower eyed him as a God;

Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did mightier deeds than otherwise he had

done,

And so the realm was made; but then
their vows—

First mainly thro' that sullying of our
Queen—

Began to gall the knighthood, asking
whence

Had Arthur right to bind them to himself?
Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up

from out the deep?

They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh
and blood

Of our old kings: whence then? a doubt-
ful lord

To bind them by inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would

violate:

For feel this arm of mine—the tide within
Rud with free chase and heather-scented

air,

Pulsing full man; can Arthur make me
pure

As any maiden child? lock up my tongue
I can uttering freely what I freely hear?

Lead me to one? The wide world laughs
at it.

And worldling of the world am I, and
know

The ptarmigan that whitens ere his hour
Woos his own end; we are not angels here

None shall be: vows—I am woodman of
the woods.

And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
Mock them : my soul, we love but whil
we may ;

And therefore is my love solarge for thee,
Seeing it is not bounded save by love.'

Here ending, he moved toward her,
and she said,

' Good : an I turn'd away my love for thee
To some one thrice as courteous as thy-
self—

For courtesy wins woman all as well
As valour may, but he that closes both
Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller indeed,
Rosier and comelier, thou—but say I
loved

This knightliest of all knights, and cast
thee back

Thine own small saw, " We love but
while we may,"

Well then, what answer ?'

He that while she spake,
Mindful of what he brought to adorn her
with,

The jewels, had let one finger lightly touch
The warm white apple of her throat,
replied,

' Press this a little closer, sweet, until—
Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd—
meat,

Wine, wine—and I will love thee to the
death,

And out beyond into the dream to come.'

So then, when both were brought to
full accord,

She rose, and set before him all he wil'd ;
And after these had comforted the blood
With meats and wines, and satiated their
hearts—

Now talking of their wo odland paradise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the founts,
the lawns ;

Now mocking at the much ungainlines,
And craven shifts, and long crane legs of
Mark—

Then Tristram laughing caught the harp,
and sang :

' Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend
the brier !

A star in heaven, a star within the mere !

Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,

And one was far apart, and one was near !

Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the
grass !

And one was water and one star was fire

And one will ever shine and one will pass,

Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the
mere.'

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-
tram show'd

And swung the ruby carcanet. She cried,

' The collar of some Order, which our
King

Hath newly founded, all for thee, my soul,

For thee, to yield thee grace beyond thy
peers.'

' Not so, my Queen,' he said, ' but the
red fruit

Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-heaven,

And won by Tristram as a tourney-prize,

And hither brought by Tristram for his
last

Love-offering and peace-offering unto
thee.'

He rose, he turn'd, then, flinging round
her neck,

Claspt it, and cried ' Thine Order, O my
Queen !'

But, while he bow'd to kiss the jewell'd
throat,

Out of the dark, just as the lips had
touch'd,

Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek —
Mark's way,' said Mark, and clove him
thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and
while he climb'd,
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping
gloom,
The stairway to the hall, and look'd and
saw
The great Queen's bower was dark,—
about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he question'd it,
'What art thou?' and the voice about
his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, 'I am thy
fool,
And I shall never make thee smile again.'

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little maid,
A novice : one low light betwixt them
burn'd
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all
abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the
face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of
flight
Sir Modred ; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the
throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance : for
this
He chill'd the popular praises of the King

With silent smiles of slow di-paragement :
And tamper'd with the Lords of the
White House,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left ; and
sought
To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end ; and all his
aims
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for Lance-
lot.

For thus it chanced one morn when
all the court,
Green-suited, but with plumes that
mock'd the may,
Had been, their wont, a-maying and
return'd,
That Modred still in green, all ear and eye,
Climb'd to the high-top of the garden-
wall
To spy some secret scandal if he might,
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her
best
Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court
The wildest and the worst ; and more
than this
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
Spied where he couch'd, and as the
gardener's hand
Picks from the colewort a green cater-
pillar,
So from the high wall and the flowering
grove
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the
heel,
And cast him as a worm upon the way ;
But when he knew the Prince tho' marr'd
with dust,
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad man,
Made such excuses as he might, and these
Full knightly without scorn ; for in those
day-

No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in
scorn ;

But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in him
By those whom God had made full-limb'd
and tall,

Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
And he was answer'd softly by the King
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help
To raise the Prince, who rising twice or
thrice

Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,
and went :

But, ever after, the small violence done
Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long
A little bitter pool about a stone
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
This matter to the Queen, at first she
laugh'd
Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,
Then shudder'd, as the village wife who
cries
'I shudder, some one steps across my
grave ;'
Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for
indeed
She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
Would track her guilt until he found, and
hers
Would be for evermore a name of scorn.
Henceforward rarely could she front in
hall,
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent
eye :
Henceforward too, the Powers that tend
the soul,
To help it from the death that cannot die,
And save it even in extremes, began
To vex and plague her. Many a time for
hours,

Beside the placid breathings of the King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and
went

Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking
doors,

Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the
walls—

Held her awake : or if she slept she
dream'd

An awful dream ; for then she seem'd to
stand

On some vast plain before a setting sun,
And from the sun there swiftly made at her
A ghastly something, and its shadow flew
Before it, till it touch'd her, and she
turn'd—

When lo ! her own, that broadening from
her feet,

And blackening, swallow'd all the land,
and in it

Far cities burnt, and with a cry she woke.
And all this trouble did not pass but
grew ;

Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless
King,

And trustful courtesies of household life,
Became her bane ; and at the last she
said,

' O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine own
land,

For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again, some evil chance
Will make the smouldering scandal break
and blaze

Before the people, and our lord the King.'
And Lancelot ever promised, but re-
main'd,

And still they met and met. Again she
said,

' O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee
hence.'

And then they were agreed upon a night
(When the good King should not be there)
to meet

And part for ever. Passion-pale they met
And greeted : hands in hands, and eye
to eye,

Low on the border of her couch they sat
Stammering and staring : it was their
last hour,

A madness of farewells. And Modred
brought

His creatures to the basement of the tower
For testimony ; and crying with full voice
' Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last,'
aroused

Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike
Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong,
and he fell

stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare
him off,

And all was still : then she, ' The end is
come,

And I am shamed for ever ;' and he said,
' Mine be the shame ; mine was the sin :
but rise,

And fly to my strong castle overseas :
There will I hide thee, till my life shall
end,

There hold thee with my life against the
world.'

She answer'd, ' Lancelot, wilt thou hold
me so ?

Nay, friend, for we have taken our fare-
wells.

Would God that thou couldst hide me
from myself !

Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and
thou

Unwilled : yet rise now, and let us fly,
For I will draw me into sanctuary,

And bide my doom.' So Lancelot got
her horse,

Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,

And then they rode to the divided way,
There kiss'd, and parted weeping : for
he past,

Loves-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,
Back to his land : but she to Almsbury
Fled all night long by glimmering waste
and weald,

And heard the Spirits of the waste and
weald

Mean as she fled, or thought she heard
them moan :

And in herself she moan'd ' Too late, too
late !'

Till in the cold wind that foreruns the
morn,

A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,
Croak'd, and she thought, ' He spies a
field of death ;

For now the Heathen of the Northern
Sea,

Lured by the crimes and frailties of the
court,

Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land.'

And when she came to Almsbury she
spoke

There to the nuns, and said, ' Mine
enemies

Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask

Her name to whom ye yield it, till her
time

To tell you :' and her beauty, grace and
power,

Wrought as a charm upon them, and they
pared

To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode
For many a week, unknown, among the
nuns ;

Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name,
nor sought,

Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for
shrif,

But communed only with the little maid,
Who pleased her with a babbling
heedlessness

Which often lured her from herself ; but
now,

This night, a rumour wildly blown about
Came, that Sir Modred had usurp'd the
realm,

And leagued him with the heathen, while
the King

Was waging war on Lancelot : then she
thought,

'With what a hate the people and the
King

Must hate me,' and bow'd down upon
her hands

Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd
No silence, brake it, uttering 'Late ! so
late !

What hour, I wonder, now ?' and when
she drew

No answer, by and by began to hum
An air the nuns had taught her ; 'Late,
so late !'

Which when she heard, the Queen look'd
up, and said,

'O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may
weep.'

Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

'Late, late, so late ! and dark the night
and chill !

Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

'No light had we : for that we do
repent ;

And learning this, the bridegroom will
relent.

Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

'No light : so late ! and dark and chill
the night !

O let us in, that we may find the light !
Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.

'Have we not heard the bridegroom is
so sweet ?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet !
No, no, too late ! ye cannot enter now.'

So sang the novice, while full passion-
ately,

Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wept
the sad Queen.

Then said the little novice prattling to her,

'O pray you, noble lady, weep no
more ;

But let my words, the words of one so
small,

Who knowing nothing knows but to obey,
And if I do not there is penance given—
Comfort your sorrows ; for they do not
flow

From evil done ; right sure am I of that,
Who see your tender grace and stateliness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord the
King's,

And weighing find them less ; for gone is
he

To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot
there,

Round that strong castle where he holds
the Queen ;

And Modred whom he left in charge of all,
The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's
grief

For his own self, and his own Queen, and
realm,

Must needs be thrice as great as any of
ours.

For me, I thank the saints, I am not
great.

For if there ever come a grief to me
I cry my cry in silence, and have done.
None knows it, and my tears have brought
me good :

But even were the griefs of little ones
As great as those of great ones, yet this
grief

Is added to the griefs the great must bear,
That howsoever much they may desire
Silence, they cannot weep behind a cloud :
As even here they talk at Almesbury
About the good King and his wicked
Queen,

And were I such a King with such a Queen,
Well might I wish to veil her wickedness,
But were I such a King, it could not be.'

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd the
Queen,

'Will the child kill me with her innocent
talk ?'

But openly she answer'd, 'Must not I,
If this false traitor have displaced his lord,
Grieve with the common grief of all the
realm ?'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'this is all
woman's grief,

That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table
Round

Which good King Arthur founded, years
ago,

With signs and miracles and wonders,
there

At Camelot, ere the coming of the Queen.'

Then thought the Queen within herself
again,

'Will the child kill me with her foolish
prate ?'

But openly she spake and said to her,
'O little maid, shut in by nunnery walls,

What canst thou know of Kings and
Tables Round,

Or what of signs and wonders, but the
signs

And simple miracles of thy nunnery ?'

To whom the little novice garrulously,
'Yea, but I know : the land was full of
signs

And wonders ere the coming of the Queen.
So said my father, and himself was knight
Of the great Table—at the founding of it ;
And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and
he said

That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
After the sunset, down the coast, he heard
Strange music, and he paused, and
turning—there,

All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
He saw them—headland after headland
flame

Far on into the rich heart of the west :
And in the light the white mermaid
swam,

And strong man-breasted things stood
from the sea,

And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the
land,

To which the little elves of chasm and cleft
Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
So said my father—yea, and furthermore,
Next morning, while he past the dim-lit
woods,

Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside
flower,

That shook beneath them, as the thistle
shakes

When three gray linnets wrangle for the
seed :

And still at evenings on before his home

The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to Camelot,
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the
 hall ;
 And in the hall itself was such a feast
 As never man had dream'd ; for every
 knight
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served
 By hands unseen ; and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated things
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the
 butts
 While the wine ran : so glad were spirits
 and men
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen.'

Then spake the Queen and somewhat
 bitterly,
 'Were they so glad ? ill prophets were
 they all,
 Spirits and men : could none of them
 foresee,
 Not even thy wise father with his signs
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon the
 realm ?'

To whom the novice garrulously again,
 'Yea, one, a bard ; of whom my father
 said,
 Full many a noble war-song had he sung,
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,
 Between the steep cliff and the coming
 wave ;
 And many a mystic lay of life and death
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-
 tops,
 When round him bent the spirits of the
 hills

With all their dewy hair blown back like
 flame :
 So said my father—and that night the bard
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang
 the King
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd at
 those
 Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois :
 For there was no man knew from whence
 he came ;
 But after tempest, when the long wave
 broke
 All down the thundering shores of Bude
 and Bos,
 There came a day as still as heaven, and
 then
 They found a naked child upon the sands
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea ;
 And that was Arthur ; and they foster'd
 him
 Till he by miracle was approv'n King :
 And that his grave should be a mystery
 From all men, like his birth ; and could
 he find
 A woman in her womanhood as great
 As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,
 The twain together well might change the
 world.
 But even in the middle of his song
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the
 harp,
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would
 have fall'n,
 But that they stay'd him up ; nor would
 he tell
 His vision ; but what doubt that he foresaw
 This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen ?'

Then thought the Queen, 'Lo ! they
 have set her on,
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,
 To play upon me,' and bow'd her head
 nor spake.

Whereat the novice crying, with clasped hands,

Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue

Full often, 'and, sweet lady, if I seem
To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales
Which my good father told me, check me too

Nor let me shame my father's memory, one
Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say
Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,
Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,

And left me; but of others who remain,
And of the two first-famed for courtesy—
And pray you check me if I ask amiss—
But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved

Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?'

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her,

'Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and the King
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and these two

Were the most nobly-manner'd men of all;

For manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of loyal nature, and of noble mind.'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'be manners such fair fruit?

Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousand-fold

Less noble, being, as all rumour runs,
The most disloyal friend in all the world.'

To which a mournful answer made the Queen:

'O closed about by narrowing nursery-walls,

What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights

And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?

If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight
Were for one hour less noble than himself,

Pray for him that he scape the doom of fire,

And weep for her who drew him to his doom.'

'Yea,' said the little novice, 'I pray for both;

But I should all as soon believe that his,
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the King's,
As I could think, sweet lady, yours would be

Such as they are, were you the sinful Queen.'

So she, like many another babbler, hurt
Whom she would soothe, and harm'd
where she would heal;

For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat
Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who cried,

'Such as thou art be never maiden more
For ever! then their tool, set on to plague
And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
And traitress.' When that storm of anger

broke

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
White as her veil, and stood before the Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach
Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,
And when the Queen had added 'Get thee hence,'

Fled frightened. Then that other left alone

Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,
 Saying in herself, 'The simple, fearful child
 Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful
 guilt,
 Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
 But help me, heaven, for surely I repent.
 For what is true repentance but in
 thought—
 Not ev'n in inmost thought to think again
 The sins that made the past so pleasant
 to us :
 And I have sworn never to see him more,
 To see him more.'

And ev'n in saying this,
 Her memory from old habit of the mind
 Went slipping back upon the golden days
 In which she saw him first, when Lancelot
 came,
 Reputed the best knight and goodliest
 man,
 Ambassador, to lead her to his lord
 Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead
 Of his and her retinue moving, they,
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
 And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for the
 time
 Was maytime, and as yet no sin was
 dream'd,)
 Rode under groves that look'd a paradise
 Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
 That seem'd the heavens upbreking
 thro' the earth,
 And on from hill to hill, and every day
 Beheld at noon in some delicious dale
 The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised
 For brief repast or afternoon repose
 By couriers gone before ; and on again,
 Till yet once more ere set of sun they saw
 The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,
 That crown'd the state pavilion of the
 King,
 Blaze by the rushing brook or silent well.

But when the Queen immersed in such
 a trance,
 And moving thro' the past unconsciously,
 Came to that point where first she saw
 the King
 Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to
 find
 Her journey done, glanced at him, thought
 him cold,
 High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not
 like him,
 'Not like my Lancelot'—while she
 brooded thus
 And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
 again,
 There rode an armed warrior to the doors.
 A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery
 ran,
 Then on a sudden a cry, 'The King.'
 She sat
 Stiff-stricken, listening ; but when armed
 feet
 Thro' the long gallery from the outer doors
 Rang coming, prone from off her seat she
 fell,
 And grovell'd with her face against the
 floor :
 There with her milkwhite arms and
 shadowy hair
 She made her face a darkness from the
 King :
 And in the darkness heard his armed feet
 Pause by her ; then came silence, then a
 voice,
 Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's
 Denouncing judgment, but tho' changed,
 the King's :

'Liest thou here so low, the child of one
 I honour'd, happy, dead before thy shame?
 Well is it that no child is born of thee.
 The children born of thee are sword and
 fire,

Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern
Sea ;

Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
right arm

The mightiest of my knights, abode with
me,

Have everywhere about this land of Christ
In twelve great battles ruining overthrown.
And knowest thou now from whence I
come—from him,

From waging bitter war with him : and he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse
way,

Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
He spared to lift his hand against the King
Who made him knight : but many a
knight was slain ;

And many more, and all his kith and kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
And many more when Modred raised
revolt,

Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.
And of this remnant will I leave a part,
True men who love me still, for whom I
live,

To guard thee in the wild hour coming on,
Lest but a hair of this low head be harm'd.
Fear not : thou shalt be guarded till my
death.

Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies
Have err'd not, that I march to meet my
doom.

Thou hast not made my life so sweet to
me,

That I the King should greatly care to
live ;

For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my life.
Bear with me for the last time while I show,
Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast
sinn'd.

For when the Roman left us, and their law
Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways
Were fill'd with rapine, here and there a
deed

Of prowess done redress'd a random
wrong.

But I was first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and
all

The realms together under me, their
Head,

In that fair Order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.

I made them lay their hands in mine and
swear

To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as
their King,

To break the heathen and uphold the
Christ,

To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To honour his own word as if his God's,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her ; for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable
words

And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a
man.

And all this throve before I wedded thee,
Believing, "to mine help-mate, one to feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy."
Then came thy shameful sin with Lance-
lot ;

Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt ;

Then others, following these my mightiest
 knights,
 And drawing foul ensample from fair
 names,
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
 Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
 And all thro' thee ! so that this life of mine
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe
 and wrong,
 Not greatly care to lose ; but rather think
 How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
 To sit once more within his lonely hall,
 And miss the wonted number of my
 knights,
 And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds
 As in the golden days before thy sin.
 For which of us, who might be left, could
 speak
 Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at
 thee ?
 And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
 Thy shadow still would glide from room
 to room,
 And I should evermore be vext with thee
 In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
 Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
 For think not, tho' thou wouldst not love
 thy lord,
 Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
 I am not made of so slight elements.
 Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
 shame.
 I hold that man the worst of public foes
 Who either for his own or children's sake,
 To save his blood from scandal, lets the
 wife
 Whom he knows false, abide and rule the
 house :
 For being thro' his cowardice allow'd
 Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
 She like a new disease, unknown to men,
 Creeps, no precaution used, among the
 crowd.

Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and
 saps
 The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
 pulse
 With devil's leaps, and poisons half the
 young.
 Worst of the worst were that man he that
 reigns !
 Better the King's waste hearth and aching
 heart
 Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
 The mockery of my people, and their
 bane.'

He paused, and in the pause she crept
 an inch
 Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
 Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
 Then waiting by the doors the warhorse
 neigh'd
 As at a friend's voice, and he spake again :

' Yet think not that I come to urge thy
 crimes,
 I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
 I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
 To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
 My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
 The wrath which forced my thoughts on
 that fierce law,
 The doom of treason and the flaming
 death,
 (When first I learnt thee hidden here) is
 past.
 The pang—which while I weigh'd thy
 heart with one
 Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
 Made my tears burn—is also past—in
 part.
 And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,
 Lo ! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
 Forgives : do thou for thine own soul the
 rest.

But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with
thee—

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the
King's.

I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh.
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and
mine own flesh,

Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee:" yet not less, O Guine-
vere,

For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into my
life

So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,

And so thou lean on our fair father Christ.
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and
thou

Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,
and know

I am thine husband—not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me
that,

I charge thee, my last hope. Now must
I hence.

Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet
blow:

They summon me their King to lead mine
hosts

Far down to that great battle in the west.
Where I must strike against the man they
call

My sister's son—no kin of mine, who
leagues

With Lords of the White Horse, heathen,
and knights,

Traitors—and strike thro' me, and me—
myself

Death, or I know not what mysterious
doom.

And thou remaining here wilt learn the
event;

But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side; see thee no more—
Farewell!

And while she grovell'd at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er her
neck,

And in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that
blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps
were gone,
Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish
found

The casement: 'peradventure,' so she
thought,

'If I might see his face, and not be seen.'
And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nurse with each a
light

Stood, and he gave them charge about the
Queen,

To guard and foster her for evermore.
And while he spake to these his helm was
lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon
clung

Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the
lights,

The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.
And even then he turn'd; and more and
more

The moony vapour rolling round the King,

It surely was my profit had I known :
 It would have been my pleasure had I
 seen.
 We needs must love the highest when we
 see it,
 Not Lancelot, nor another.'

Here her hand
 Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes : she
 look'd and saw
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said
 to her,
 'Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven ?'
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
 All round her, weeping ; and her heart
 was loosed
 Within her, and she wept with these and
 said,

'Ye know me then, that wicked one,
 who broke
 The vast design and purpose of the King.
 O shut me round with narrowing nunnery-
 walls,
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying
 "shame."
 I must not scorn myself : he loves me still.
 Let no one dream but that he loves me
 still.
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me,
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you ;
 Wear black and white, and be a nun like
 you,

Fast with your fasts, not feasting with
 your feasts :
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at
 your joys,
 But not rejoicing ; mingle with your rites :
 Pray and be pray'd for ; lie before your
 shrines ;
 Do each low office of your holy house ;
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute dole
 To poor sick people, richer in His eyes
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I ;
 And treat their loathsome hurts and heal
 mine own ;
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in prayer
 The sombre close of that voluptuous day,
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the
 King.'

She said : they took her to themselves ;
 and she
 Still hoping, fearing 'is it yet too late ?'
 Dwelt with them, till in time their Abbess
 died.
 Then she, for her good deeds and her
 pure life,
 And for the power of ministration in her,
 And likewise for the high rank she had
 borne,
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess, lived
 For three brief years, and there, an
 Abbess, past
 To where beyond these voices there is
 peace.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
 First made and latest left of all the
 knights,
 Told, when the man was no more than a
 voice
 In the white winter of his age, to
 those

With whom he dwelt, new faces, other
 minds.

Then on their march to westward,
 Bedivere,
 Who slowly paced among the slumbering
 host,

Heard in his tent the moanings of the
King :

‘I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark’d Him in the flowering of His
fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me ! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and
dim,
And have not power to see it as it is :
Perchance, because we see not to the
close ;—
For I, being simple, thought to work His
will,
And have but stricken with the sword in
vain ;
And all whereon I lean’d in wife and
friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my
death :
Nay—God my Christ—I pass but shal.
not die.’

Then, ere that last weird battle in the
west,
There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain
kill’d
In Lancelot’s war, the ghost of Gawain
blown
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling, ‘Hollow, hollow all
delight !
Hail, King ! to-morrow thou shalt pass
away.

Farewell ! there is an isle of rest for thee.
And I am blown along a wandering wind,
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight.’
And fainter onward, like wild birds that
change
Their season in the night and wail their
way
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind
the dream
Shrill’d ; but in going mingled with dim
cries
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
As of some lonely city sack’d by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with
wail
Pass to new lords ; and Arthur woke and
call’d,
‘Who spake ? A dream. O light upon
the wind,
Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these
dim cries
Thine ? or doth all that haunts the waste
and wild
Mourn, knowing it will go along with me ?’

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and
spake :
‘O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the
field ;
But in their stead thy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud
For ever : but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in
death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man ;
And care not thou for dreams from him,
but rise—
I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people, and
knights
Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but
grosser grown

Then heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.

Right well in heart they know thee for the King.

Arise, go forth and conquer as of old.'

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Belivere:

'Far other is this battle to the west

Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,

And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,

Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,

And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine

To war against my people and my knights.

The king who fights his people fights himself.

And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke

That strikes them dead is as my death to me.

Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way

Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I saw

One lying in the dust at Almesbury,

Hath folded in the passes of the world.'

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,

And ever push'd Sir Mordred, league by league,

Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse—
A land of old upheaven from the abyss

By fire, to sink into the abyss again ;

Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwell,

And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away

The phantom circle of a moaning sea.

There the pursuer could pursue no more,

And he that fled no further fly the King ;

And there, that day when the great light
of heaven

Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.

Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.

A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea :

Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew

Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold

With formless fear ; and ev'n on Arthur fell

Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.

For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,

And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew ;

And some had visions out of golden youth,

And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle ; and in the mist

Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fights,

And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,

Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands,
the crash

Of battleaxes on shattered helmets, and shrieks

After the clime, of those who falling down
Look'd up for heaven, and only saw the mist ;

And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,

oaths, insults, cries, and monstrous blasphemies,

Sweat, writhings, anguish, labouring of
 the lungs
 In that close mist, and cryings for the
 light,
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the
 dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that
 shore,
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
 A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous
 day
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling,
 came
 A bitter wind, clear from the North, and
 blew
 Themist aside, and with that wind the tide
 Rose, and the pale King glanced across
 the field
 Of battle : but no man was moving there ;
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
 Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan wave
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and
 down
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the
 fallen,
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought
 with Rome,
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores
 The voice of days of old and days to be.

Thenspake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
 And whiter than the mist that all day long
 Had held the field of battle was the King :

'Hearest thou this great voice that
 shakes the world,
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we
 move,
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,

My dead, as tho' they had not died for
 me?—

O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
 Behold, I seem but King among the dead.'

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere :
 'My King,
 King everywhere ! and so the dead have
 kings,
 There also will I worship thee as King.
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
 Who love thee ; but who hates thee, he
 that brought
 The heathen back among us, yonder
 stands,
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine
 house.'

Then spake the King : ' My house hath
 been my doom.
 But call not thou this traitor of my house
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with
 me.
 My house are rather they who swear my
 vows,
 Yea, even while they brake them, own'd
 me King,
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
 When all the purport of my throne hath
 fail'd,
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for
 King.
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry ;
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou
 see
 Yet, ere I pass.' And uttering this the
 King
 Made at the man : then Modred smote
 his liege
 Heard on that helm which many a heathen
 sword

Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one
blow,

Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,
King Arthur. Then, because his wound
was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere:

'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think
that we

Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly
deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.

I perish by this people which I made,—
Thou Merlin sware that I should come
again

To rule once more; but, let what will be,
be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou remem-
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite; mystic, won-
derful,

Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
helm—

A little thing may harm a wounded man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept,

And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
stepping down

By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excali-
bur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Thenspake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :

' Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave?

What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast
heard ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

' I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :

' Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy féalty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud :

' And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of
many men.

What good should follow this, if this were
done ?

What harm, undone ? Deep harm to
disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king
demand

An act unprofitable, against himself ?

The King is sick, and knows not what
he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumours of a doubt ? But were this
kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, " King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the
Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills."

So might some old man speak in the after-
time

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honour and much fame
were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own
conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily :

'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much
in wrath :

'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendour of the
moon,

And flashing round and round, and
whirl'd in an arch

Shot like a streamer of the northern storm—
Seen where the moving isles of winter
shock

By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd
him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath :

'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or
seen?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the
gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-
ing him :

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

That caught him by the hilt, and
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.'

And answer made King Arthur,
breathing hard :

'My end draws nigh : 'tis time that I
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,
And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall
die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half
rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not
words ;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one
knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted
hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd
the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
' Quick, quick !
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to
ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as
he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
before. His own thought drove him like
a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and
right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels—
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky
barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were
ware
That all the decks were dense with stately
forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream
—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold : and
from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, ' Place me in
the barge.'
So to the barge they came. There those
three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King,
and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining
loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face
was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd
moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-
ing east ;

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
 the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
 Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of
 dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had past for ever-
 more,
 The stillness of the dead world's winter
 dawn
 Amazed him, and he groan'd, 'The King
 is gone.'
 And therewithal came on him the weird
 rhyme,
 'From the great deep to the great deep
 he goes.'

Whereat he slowly turn'd and slowly
 clomb
 The last hard footstep of that iron crag ;
 Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet,
 and cried,
 'He passes to be King among the dead,
 And after healing of his grievous wound
 He comes again ; but—if he come no
 more—

O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black
 boat,
 Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three
 whereat we gazed
 On that high day, when, clothed with
 living light,
 They stood before his throne in silence,
 friends
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his
 need ?'

Then from the dawn it seem'd there
 came, but faint
 As from beyond the limit of the world,
 Like the last echo born of a great cry,
 Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
 Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,
 and clomb
 Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and
 saw,
 Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
 Or thought he saw, the speck that bare
 the King,
 Down that long water opening on the deep
 Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
 From less to less and vanish into light.
 And the new sun rose bringing the new
 year.

TO THE QUEEN.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
 And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—
 Bear witness, that rememberable day,
 When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the
 Prince
 Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering life
 again
 From halfway down the shadow of the
 grave,

Past with thee thro' thy people and their
 love,
 And London roll'd one tide of joy thro' all
 Her trebled millions, and loud leagues of
 man
 And welcome ! witness, too, the silent cry,
 The prayer of many a race and creed,
 and clime—
 Thunderless lightnings striking under sea

From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
And that true North, whereof we lately
heard

A strain to shame us 'keep you to your-
selves ;

So loyal is too costly ! friends—your love
Is but a burthen : loose the bond, and go.
Is this the tone of empire ? here the faith
That made us rulers ? this, indeed, her
voice

And meaning, whom the roar of Hougou-
ment

Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven ?
What shock has fool'd her since, that she
should speak

So feebly ? wealthier—wealthier—hour
by hour !

The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among her
sens ?

There rang her voice, when the full city
peal'd

Thee and thy Prince ! The loyal to their
crown

Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless
homes

For ever-broadening England, and her
throne

In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness : if she
knows

And dreads it we are fall'n. — But thou,
my Queen,

Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
For one to whom I made it o'er his grave
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war
with Soul

Rather than that gray king, whose name,
a ghost,

Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from
mountain peak,

And cloaves to cairn and cromlech still ;
or him

Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,
one

Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
That hover'd between war and wanton-
ness,

And crowning—and dethronements : take
withal

Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that
Heaven

Will blow the tempest in the distance back
From thine and ours : for some are scared,
who mark,

Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every vane with every wind,
And wordy trucklings to the transient
hour,

And fierce or careless looseners of the
faith,

And Softness breeding scorn of simple
life,

Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
Or Labour, with a groan and not a voice,
Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n from
France,

And that which knows, but careful for itself
And that which knows not, ruling that
which knows

To its own harm : the goal of this great
world

Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-
grown

And crown'd Republic's crowning
common-sense,

That saved her many times, not fail—
their fears

Are morning shadows larger than the
shapes

That cast them, not those gloomier which
forego

The darkness of that battle in the West,
Where all of high and holy dies away.

QUEEN MARY:

A DRAMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.
 PHILIP, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*
 THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.
 REGINALD POLE, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*
 SIMON RENARD, *Spanish Ambassador.*
 LE SIEUR DE NOAILLES, *French Ambassador.*
 THOMAS CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
 SIR NICHOLAS HEATH, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*
 EDWARD COURTENAY, *Earl of Devon.*
 LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, *afterwards Lord Howard, and Lord High Admiral.*
 LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME. LORD PAGET. LORD PETRE.
 STEPHEN GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*
 EDMUND BONNER, *Bishop of London.* THOMAS THIRLBY, *Bishop of Ely.*
 SIR THOMAS WYATT }
 SIR THOMAS STAFFORD } *Insurrectionary Leaders.*
 SIR RALPH BAGENHALL. SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.
 SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD. SIR WILLIAM CECIL.
 SIR THOMAS WHITE, *Lord Mayor of London.*
 THE DUKE OF ALVA }
 THE COUNT DE FERIA } *attending on Philip.*
 PETER MARTYR. FATHER COLE. FATHER BOURNE.
 VILLA GARCIA. SOTO.
 CAPTAIN BRETT }
 ANTHONY KNYVETT } *Adherents of Wyatt.*
 PETERS, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*
 ROGER, *Servant to Noailles.* WILLIAM, *Servant to Wyatt.*
 STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD to the Princess Elizabeth.
 OLD NOKES and NOKES.
 MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, *Mother of Courtenay.*
 LADY CLARENCE.
 LADY MAGDALEN DACRES }
 ALICE. } *Ladies in Waiting to the Queen.*
 MAID OF HONOUR to the Princess Elizabeth.
 JOAN } *two Country Wives.*
 TIB }

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, Two Gentlemen, Aldermen
 Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, Gospellers, Marshalmen, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ALDGATE RICHLY
 DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN.

Marshalman. Stand back, keep a clear lane! When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen

Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth! Shout, knaves!
Citizens. Long live Queen Mary!
First Citizen. That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?
Second Citizen. It means a bastard.
Third Citizen. Nay, it means true-born.
First Citizen. Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?
Second Citizen. No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

Third Citizen. That was after, man ; that was after.

First Citizen. Then which is the bastard ?

Second Citizen. Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

Third Citizen. Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

Old Nokes (dramatic). Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

Third Citizen. No, old Nokes.

Old Nokes. It's Harry!

Third Citizen. It's Queen Mary.

Old Nokes. The blessed Mary's a-passing! [*Beats on his breast.*]

Nokes. Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

Third Citizen. Answer thou for him, then! thou'rt no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

Nokes. Eh! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born one man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

Third Citizen. But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbow, and bald o' the back, and barren at the toes, and down at heels.

Nokes. I was born of a true man and a good wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

Merchantman. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

First Citizen. He swears by the Rood. Whew!

Second Citizen. Hark! the trumpets.

[*The Procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth coming out by side, and doing justice under the gate.*]

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save her Grace: and death to Northumberland!

[*Exeunt.*]

MEET TWO GENTLEMEN.

First Gentleman. By God's light a noble creature, right royal!

Second Gentleman. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

First Gentleman. I mean the Lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

Second Gentleman. Ay, that was in her hour of joy; there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again: this Gaudineer for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild boar out of his cage to swarty Cranmer.

First Gentleman. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but misdeed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

Second Gentleman. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

First Gentleman. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

Second Gentleman. I suppose you touch upon the rumour that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumour.

First Gentleman. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will get mad upon it.

Second Gentleman. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

First Gentleman. Ay, but he's too old.

Second Gentleman. And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal; but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

First Gentleman. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: but will you not follow the procession?

Second Gentleman. No; I have seen enough for this day.

First Gentleman. Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

Cranmer. To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms,

Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow,

Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans

Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and Wells—

Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So they report: I shall be left alone.

No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

Enter PETER MARTYR.

Peter Martyr. Fly, Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name Stands first of those who sign'd the Letters Patent

That gave her royal crown to Lady Jane.

Cranmer. Stand first it may, but it was written last:

Those that are now her Privy Council, sign'd

Before me: nay, the Judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown

Of England, putting by his father's will. Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me.

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading eyes Fixt hard on mine, his frail transparent hand,

Damp with the sweat of death, and griping mine,

Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to yield

His Church of England to the Papal wolf And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency, She cannot pass her traitor council by, To make me headless.

Peter Martyr. That might be forgiven.
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not own
The bodily presence in the Eucharist,
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice:
Your creed will be your death.

Cranmer. Step after step,
Thro' many voices crying right and left,
Have I climb'd back into the primal
church,
And stand within the porch, and Christ
with me:

My flight were such a scandal to the faith,
The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post.

Peter Martyr. But you divorced
Queen Catharine and her father; hence,
her hate
Will burn till you are burn'd.

Cranmer. I cannot help it.
The Canonists and Schoolmen were with
me.

'Thou shalt not wed thy brother's wife.'
—'Tis written,

'They shall be childless.' True, Mary
was born,

But France would not accept her for a
bride

As being born from incest; and this
wrought

Upon the king; and child by child, you
know,

Were momentary sparkles out as quick
Almost as kindled; and he brought his
doubts

And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for him
He *did* believe the bond incestuous.

But wherefore am I trenching on the time
That should already have seen your steps
a mile

From me and Lambeth? God be with
you! Go.

Peter Martyr. Ah, but how fierce a
letter you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd you
For setting up a mass at Canterbury
To please the Queen.

Cranmer. It was a wheedling monk
Set up the mass.

Peter Martyr. I know it, my good
Lord.

But you so bubbled over with hot terms
Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,
She never will forgive you. Fly, my
Lord, fly!

Cranmer. I wrote it, and God grant
me power to burn!

Peter Martyr. They have given me a
safe conduct: for all that
I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see you,
Dear friend, for the last time; farewell,
and fly.

Cranmer. Fly and farewell, and let
me die the death.

[*Exit Peter Martyr.*]

Enter OLD SERVANT.

O, kind and gentle master, the Queen's
Officers

Are here in force to take you to the Tower.

Cranmer. Ay, gentle friend, admit
them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* A crowd.
MARCHIONESS OF ENETER, COURTENAY,
The SIEUR DE NOAILLES and
his man ROGER *in front of the stage.*
Habit.

Noailles. Hast thou let fall those
papers in the palace?

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. 'There will be no peace for
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head.'

Roger. Ay, sir,

Noailles. And the other, 'Long live Elizabeth the Queen!'

Roger. Ay, sir; she needs must tread upon them.

Noailles. Well.

These beastly swine make such a grunting here,

I cannot catch what Father Bourne is saying.

Roger. Quiet a moment, my masters; hear what the shaveling has to say for himself.

Crowd. Hush—hear!

Bourne. —and so this unhappy land, long divided in itself, and sever'd from the faith, will return into the one true fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin Queen hath——

Crowd. No pope! no pope!

Roger (to those about him, mimicking Bourne). —hath sent for the holy legate of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy absolution which——

First Citizen. Old Bourne to the life!

Second Citizen. Holy absolution! holy Inquisition!

Third Citizen. Down with the Papist!
[*Hubbub.*]

Bourne. —and now that your good bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long under bonds for the faith— [Hubbub.]

Noailles. Friend Roger, steal thou in among the crowd,

And get the swine to shout Elizabeth. Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as midwinter, Begin with him.

Roger (goes). By the mass, old friend, we'll have no pope here while the Lady Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith, fellow, that swearest by the mass?

Roger. Ay, that am I, new converted, but the old leaven sticks to my tongue yet.

First Citizen. He says right; by the mass we'll have no mass here.

Voices of the crowd. Peace! hear him; let his own words damn the Papist. From thine own mouth I judge thee—tear him down!

Bourne. —and since our Gracious Queen, let me call her our second Virgin Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true temple——

First Citizen. Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.*]

Marchioness of Exeter. Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

Courtenay (in the pulpit). Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born,

And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

Crowd. A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[*A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.*]

Noailles. These birds of passage come before their time:

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

Roger. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you

Than this old gaping gargoyle: look you there—

The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen!

After him, boys! and pelt him from the city.

[*They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Excourt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.*]

Noailles (to Roger). Stand from me.
If Elizabeth lose her head—

That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon,
Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—

That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway—

That makes for France.

Good-day, my Lord of Devon;

A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

Courtenay. My mother said, Go up;
and up I went.

I knew they would not do me any wrong,
For I am mighty popular with them.

Noailles.

Noailles. You look'd a king.

Courtenay. Why not? I am
king's blood.

Noailles. And in the whirl of change
may come to be one.

Courtenay. Ah!

Noailles. But does your gracious Queen
entreat you kinglike?

Courtenay. Fore God, I think she
entreats me like a child.

Noailles. You've but a dull life in this
maiden court,

I fear, my Lord?

Courtenay. A life of nods and yawns.

Noailles. So you would honour my
poor house to-night,

We might enliven you. Divers honest
fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately free'd from
prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we
play.

Courtenay. At what?

Noailles. The Game of Chess.

Courtenay. The Game of Chess!

I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

Noailles. Ay, but we play with Henry,
King of France.

And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the
Channel,

We answer him with ours, and there are
messengers

That go between us.

Courtenay. Why, such a game, sir,
were whole years a playing.

Noailles. Nay; not so long I trust.
That all depends

Upon the skill and swiftness of the players.

Courtenay. The King is skilful at it?

Noailles. Very, my Lord.

Courtenay. And the stakes high?

Noailles. But not beyond your means.

Courtenay. Well, I'm the first of
players. I shall win.

Noailles. With our advice and in our
company,

And so you well attend to the king's moves.

I think you may.

Courtenay. When do you meet?

Noailles. To-night.

Courtenay (aside). I will be there; the
fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fashion him. (Aloud.)
Good morning, Noailles.

[*Exit Courtenay.*]

Noailles. Good-day, my Lord. Strange
game of chess! a King

That with her own pawns plays against a
Queen,

Whose play is all to find herself a King.

Ay; but this fine (Noailles) Courtenay
seems

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a
 Knight,
 That, with an ass's, not an horse's head,
 Skips every way, from levity or from fear.
 Well, we shall use him somehow, so that
 Gardiner
 And Simon Renard spy not out our game
 Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that
 anyone
 Suspected thee to be my man?
Roger. Not one, sir.
Noailles. No! the disguise was perfect.
 Let's away. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. Enter COURTENAY.

Courtenay. So yet am I,
 Unless my friends and mirrors lie to me,
 A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.
 Pah!
 The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn
 traitor?
 They've almost talked me into it: yet the
 word
 Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one
 As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.
 Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your
 age,
 And by your looks you are not worth the
 having,
 Yet by your crown you are.
 [*Seeing Elizabeth.*
 The Princess there?
 If I tried her and la—she's amorous.
 Have we not heard of her in Edward's
 time,
 Her freaks and frolics with the late Lord
 Admiral?
 I do believe she'd yield. I should be still
 A party in the state; and then, who
 knows—

Elizabeth. What are you musing on,
 my Lord of Devon?
Courtenay. Has not the Queen—
Elizabeth. Done what, Sir?
Courtenay. —made you follow
 The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Lennox?—
 You,
 The heir presumptive.
Elizabeth. Why do you ask? you
 know it.
Courtenay. You needs must bear it
 hardly.
Elizabeth. No, indeed!
 I am utterly submissive to the Queen.
Courtenay. Well, I was musing upon
 that; the Queen
 Is both my foe and yours: we should be
 friends.
Elizabeth. My Lord, the hatred of
 another to us
 Is no true bond of friendship.
Courtenay. Might it not
 Be the rough preface of some closer
 bond?
Elizabeth. My Lord, you late were
 loosed from out the Tower,
 Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,
 You spent your life; that broken, out you
 flutter
 Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now
 would settle
 Upon this flower, now that; but all things
 here
 At court are known; you have solicited
 The Queen, and been rejected.
Courtenay. Flower, she!
 Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh and
 sweet
 As the first flower no bee has ever tried.
Elizabeth. Are you the bee to try me?
 why, but now
 I called you butterfly.
Courtenay. You did me wrong,

I love not to be called a butterfly :

Why do you call me butterfly ?

Elizabeth. Why do you go so gay then ?

Courtenay. Velvet and gold.

This dress was made me as the Earl of
Devon

To take my seat in ; looks it not right royal ?

Elizabeth. So royal that the Queen
forbad you wearing it.

Courtenay. I wear it then to spite her.

Elizabeth. My Lord, my Lord ;

I see you in the Tower again. Her
Majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—quodates
kneel to you.—

Courtenay. I am the noblest blood in
Europe, Madam,

A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

Elizabeth. She hears you make your
boast that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good
Lord.

Courtenay. How folly ? a great party
in the state

Wills me to wed her.

Elizabeth. Failing her, my Lord,

Doth not as great a party in the state

Will you to wed me ?

Courtenay. Even so, fair lady.

Elizabeth. You know to flatter ladies.

Courtenay. Nay, I meant

True matters of the heart.

Elizabeth. My heart, my Lord,

Is no great party in the state as yet.

Courtenay. Great, said you ? nay, you
shall be great. I love you,

Lay my life in your hands. Can you be
close ?

Elizabeth. Can you, my Lord ?

Courtenay. Close as a miser's casket.

I listen :

The King of France, Noailles the Am-
bassador,

The Duke of Suffolk, and Sir Peter Carew,
Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, and others,
Have sworn this Spanish marriage shall
not be.

If Mary will not hear us—well—conjec-
ture—

Were I in Devon with my wedded bride,
The people there so worship me—You
ear ;

You shall be Queen.

Elizabeth. You speak too low,
my Lord ;

I cannot hear you.

Courtenay. I'll repeat it.

Elizabeth. No !
Stand further off, or you may lose your
head.

Courtenay. I have a head to lose for
your sweet sake.

Elizabeth. Have you, my Lord ? Best
keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.

Not many friends are mine, except indeed
Among the many. I believe you mine ;
And so you may continue mine, farewell,
And that at once.

Enter MARY, blind.

Mary. Whispersing—longed together
To bar me from my Phillip.

Courtenay. Pray—consider—

Elizabeth (*seeing the Queen*). Well,
that's a noble loss of yours, my
Lord.

I trust that he will carry you well to-day,
And heal your headache.

Courtenay. You are well ; what head-
ache ?

Headache, perchance ; not headache.

Elizabeth (*aside to Courtenay*). Are
you blind ?

[*Courtenay* *retires to the Queen and exits.*
Exit Mary.

Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Was that my Lord of Devon?
do not you

Be seen in corners with my Lord of
Devon.

He hath fallen out of favour with the
Queen.

She fears the Lords may side with you
and him

Against her marriage; therefore is he
dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather
come

To woo you, niece, he is dangerous every-
way.

Elizabeth. Not very dangerous that
way, my good uncle.

Howard. But your own state is full of
danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers,

Look to you as the one to crown their
ends.

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray
you;

Nay, if by chance you hear of any such,
Speak not thereof—no, not to your best
friend,

Lest you should be confounded with it.
Still—

Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,
You know your Latin—quiet as a dead
body.

What was my Lord of Devon telling you?

Elizabeth. Whether he told me any-
thing or not,

I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.
Quiet as a dead body.

Howard. You do right well.

I do not care to know; but this I charge
you,

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord
Chancellor

(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog
May love a puppy cur for no more reason
Than that the twain have been tied up
together,

Thus Gardiner—for the two were fellow-
prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower—
Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to
it, niece,

He hath no fence when Gardiner ques-
tions him;

All oozes out; yet him—because they
know him

The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet
(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the
people

Claim as their natural leader—ay, some
say,

That you shall marry him, make him King
belike.

Elizabeth. Do they say so, good
uncle?

Howard. Ay, good niece!

You should be plain and open with me,
niece.

You should not play upon me.

Elizabeth. No, good uncle.

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner. The Queen would see your
Grace upon the moment.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I think she means to coun-
sel your withdrawing

To Ashridge, or some other country house.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I do but bring the message,
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from
herself.

Elizabeth. 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd
before the word

Was spoken, for in truth I had meant to
crave

Permission of her Highness to retire
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies there.

Gardiner. Madam, to have the wish
before the word

Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to
make

A farewell present to your Grace.

Elizabeth. My Lord,
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

Gardiner. I doubt it not, Madam,
most loyal. [*Bowes low and exits.*]

Howard. See,

This comes of parleying with my Lord of
Devon.

Well, well, you must obey; and I myself
Believe it will be better for your welfare.
Your time will come.

Elizabeth. I think my time will come.
Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know,
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt within
me

Stirrings of some great doom when God's
just hour

Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—his
big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd eyes
Half fright me.

Howard. You've a bold heart; keep
it so.

He cannot touch you save that you turn
traitor;

And so take heed I pray you—you are one
Who love that men should smile upon you,
niece.

They'd smile you into treason—some of
them.

Elizabeth. I spy the rock beneath the
smiling sea.

But if this Philip, the proud Catholic
prince,

And this bald priest, and she that hates
me, seek

In that lone house, to practise on my life,
By poison, fire, shot, stab—

Howard. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip
and all

Your trouble to the dogstar and the devil.

Elizabeth. To the Pleiads, uncle; they
have lost a sister.

Howard. But why say that? what have
you done to lose her?

Come, come, I will go with you to the
Queen. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY with PHILIP'S miniature. ALICE.

Mary [*holding the miniature*]. Most
goodly, Kinglike and an Emperour's
son,—

A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

Alice. Goodly enough, your Grace,
and yet, methinks,

I have seen goodlier.

Mary. Ay; some waxen doll
Thy baby eyes have rested on, babbler:
All red and white, the fashion of our
land.

But my good mother came (God rest her
soul)

Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,
And in my liking.

Alice. By your Grace's leave
Your royal mother came of Spain, but
took

To the English red and white. Your
royal father

(For so they say) was all pure lily and rose
In his youth, and like a lady.

Mary. O, just God !
Sweet mother, you had time and cause
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.

Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,
forlorn !

And then the King—that traitor past
forgiveness,

The false archbishop fawning on him,
married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic

Ev'n as *she* is ; but God hath sent me
here

To take such order with all heretics

That it shall be, before I die, as tho'

My father and my brother had not lived.

What wast thou saying of this Lady Jane,
Now in the Tower ?

Alice. Why, Madam, she was passing
Some chapel down in Essex, and with her
Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady Anne
Bow'd to the Pyx ; but Lady Jane stood
up

Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.

And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady
Anne,

To him within there who made Heaven
and Earth ?

I cannot, and I dare not, tell your Grace
What Lady Jane replied.

Mary. But I will have it.

Alice. She said—pray pardon me, and
pity her—

She hath hearken'd evil counsel—ah ! she
said,

The baker made him.

Mary. Monstrous ! blasphemous !
She ought to burn. Hence, thou ! *(Exit*
Alice). No—

Her head will fall : shall it ? she is but a
child.

We do not kill the child for doing that
His father whipt him into doing—a head
So full of grace and beauty ! would that
mine

Were half as gracious ! O, my lord to be,
My love, for thy sake only.

I am eleven years older than he is.

But will he care for that ?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,
But love me only : then the bastard
sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself.

Will he be drawn to her ?

No, being of the true faith with myself.

Paget is for him—for to wed with Spain
Would treble England—Gardiner is
against him ;

The Council, people, Parliament against
him ;

But I will have him ! My hard father
hated me ;

My brother rather hated me than loved ;
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy
Virgin,

Plead with thy blessed son ; grant me my
prayer :

Give me my Philip ; and we two will lead
The living waters of the Faith again

Back thro' their widow'd channel here,
and watch

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as of
old,

To heaven, and kindled with the palms of
Christ !

Enter USHER.

Who waits, sir ?

Usher. Madam, the Lord Chancellor.

Mary. Bid him come in. *(Enter*
GARDINER.) Good morning, my
good Lord *[Exit Usher.*

Godiner. That every morning of your Majesty
May be most good, is every morning's prayer
Of your most loyal subject, Stephen Gardiner.

Mary. Come you to tell me this, my Lord?

Gardiner. And more.
Your people have begun to learn your worth.
Your pious wish to pay King Edward's debts,
Your lavish household curb'd, and the remission
Of half that subsidy levied on the people,
Make all tongues praise and all hearts beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved : the realm is poor,
The exchequer at neap-ebb : we might withdraw
Part of our garrison at Calais.

Mary. Calais !
Our one point on the main, the gate of France !
I am Queen of England ; take mine eyes,
mine heart,
But do not lose me Calais.

Gardiner. Do not fear it.
Of that hereafter. I say your Grace is loved.
That I may keep you thus, who am your friend
And ever faithful counsellor, might I speak ?

Mary. I can forespeak your speaking.
Would I marry
France Philip, if all England hate him ?
That is
Your question, and I front it with another :
Is it England, or a party ? Now, your answer.

Gardiner. My answer is, I wear
beneath my dress
A shirt of mail ; my leaves hath been assaulted,
And when I walk abroad, the populace
With fingers pointed like so many daggers,
Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and Philip ;
And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-arms
Guard my poor dreams for England.
Men would murder me,
Because they think me favourer of this marriage.

Mary. And that were hard upon you,
my Lord Chancellor.

Gardiner. But our young Earl of Devon—

Mary. Earl of Devon ?
I freed him from the Tower, placed him at Court ;
I made him Earl of Devon, and—the fool—
He wrecks his health and wealth on courtesans,
And rolls himself in carrion like a dog.

Gardiner. More like a wild boy that hath broken bounds,
Sicken'g himself with swine.

Mary. I will not trust of him.
Good, then, they will revolt : but I am Tudor,
And shall control them.

Gardiner. I will help you, Madam,
Even to the utmost. All the church is grateful.
You have ousted the monk priest, repulpited
The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the rood again,
And brought us back the mass. I am all thanks

To God and to your Grace : yet I know
well,
Your people, and I go with them so far,
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard here
to play
The tyrant, or in commonwealth or
church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this
the face of one who plays the
tyrant ?

Peruse it ; is it not goodly, ay, and
gentle ?

Gardiner. Madam, methinks a cold
face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of
Courtenay—

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his
life

Were half as goodly (*aside*).

Mary. What is that you mutter ?

Gardiner. Oh, Madam, take it bluntly ;
marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons !

The prince is known in Spain, in Flanders,
ha !

For Philip—

Mary. You offend us ; you may leave
us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

Gardiner. If your Majesty—

Mary. I have sworn upon the body
and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.

Gardiner. Hath your Grace so sworn ?

Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gardiner. News to me !

It then remains for your poor Gardiner,
So you still care to trust him somewhat
less

Than Simon Renard, to compose the
event

In some such form as least may harm
your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sounded
to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

Gardiner. All my hope is now

It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gardiner (aside). These princes are
like children, must be physick'd,
The bitter in the sweet. I have lost mine
office,

It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a fool.

[*Exit.*

Enter USHER.

Mary. Who waits ?

Usher. The Ambassador from France,
your Grace.

Mary. Bid him come in. Good
morning, Sir de Noailles.

[*Exit Usher.*

Noailles (entering). A happy morning
to your Majesty.

Mary. And I should some time have
a happy morning ;
I have had none yet. What says the
King your master ?

Noailles. Madam, my master hears
with much alarm,

That you may marry Philip, Prince of
Spain—

Foreseeing, with whate'er unwillingness,
That if this Philip be the titular king

Of England, and at war with him, your
Grace

And kingdom will be suck'd into the war,
Ay, tho' you long for peace ; wherefore,
my master,

If but to prove your Majesty's goodwill,
Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn
between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty ?
wherefore should I do it ?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still maintain
All former treaties with his Majesty.

Our royal word for that ! and your good
master,

Pray God he do not be the first to break
them,

Must be content with that ; and so, fare-
well.

Noailles (*going, returns*). I would your
answer had been other, Madam,
For I foresee dark days.

Mary. And so do I, sir ;
Your master works against me in the dark.
I do believe he help Northumberland
Against me.

Noailles. Nay, pure phantasy, your
Grace.

Why should he move against you ?

Mary. Will you hear why ?
Mary of Scotland,—for I have not own'd
My sister, and I will not,—after me
Is heir of England ; and my royal father,
To make the crown of Scotland one with
ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Edward's
bride ;

Ay, but your king stole her a babe from
Scotland

In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.
See then :

Mary of Scotland, married to your
Dauphin,

Would make our England, France ;
Mary of England, joining hands with Spain,
Would be too strong for France.

Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain
and we,

One crown, might rule the world. There
lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide and
seek.

Show me your faces !

Noailles. Madam, I am amazed :
French, I must needs wish all good things
for France.

That must be pardon'd me ; but I protest
Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight
Than mine into the future. We but seek
Some settled ground for peace to stand
upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this,
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever ?

Noailles. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip ?

Noailles. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of
the Emperor ?

Noailles. No, surely.

Mary. I can make allowance for thee,
Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king.

Noailles. Make no allowance for the
naked truth.

He is every way a lesser man than Charles ;
Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of daring
in him.

Mary. If cold, his life is pure.

Noailles. Why (*smiling*), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou ?

Noailles. A very wanton life indeed
(*smiling*).

Mary. Your audience is concluded,
sir. [*Exit Noailles.*]

You cannot

Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.

Enter Usher.

Who waits ?

Usher. The Ambassador of Spain,
your Grace. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIMON RENARD.

Mary. Thou art ever welcome, Simon
Renard. Hast thou

brought me the letter which thine
Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand
Of Philip ?

Renard. Nay, your Grace, it hath not reach'd me.
I know not wherefore—some mischance of flood,
And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave
And wind at their old battle : he must have written.

Mary. But Philip never writes me one poor word,
Which in his absence had been all my wealth.
Strange in a wooer !

Renard. Yet I know the Prince,
So your king-parliament suffer him to land,
Yearns to set foot upon your island shore.

Mary. God change the pebble which his kingly foot
First presses into some more costly stone
Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it
And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd firelike ;
I'll set it round with gold, with pearl,
with diamond.
Let the great angel of the church come with him ;
Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail !
God lay the waves and strow the storms at sea,
And here at land among the people ! O

Renard,
I am much beset, I am almost in despair.
Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is ours ;
But for our heretic Parliament—

Renard. O Madam,
You fly your thoughts like kites. My master, Charles,
Bad you go softly with your heretics here,
Until your throne had ceased to tremble.
Then

Spit them like larks for aught I care.
Besides,
When Henry broke the carcase of your church
To pieces, there were many wolves among you
Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den.
The Pope would have you make them render these ;
So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole ; ill counsel !
These let them keep at present ; stir not yet
This matter of the Church lands. At his coming
Your star will rise.

Mary. My star ! a baleful one.
I see but the black night, and hear the wof.

What star ?
Renard. Your star will be your princely son,
Heir of this England and the Netherlands !
And if your wolf the while should howl for more,
We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish gold.

I do believe I have dusted some already,
That, soon or late, your parliament is ours.

Mary. Why do they talk so foully of your Prince,

Renard ?
Renard. The lot of Princes. To sit high
Is to be lied about.

Mary. They call him cold,
I haughty, ay, worse.

Renard. Why, doubtless, Philip shows
Some of the bearing of your blue blood—still
All within measure—nay, it well becomes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of his father?

Renard. Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

Mary. Is this like him?

Renard. Ay, somewhat; but your Philip

Is the most princelike Prince beneath the sun.

This is a daub to Philip.

Mary. Of a pure life?

Renard. As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven,

The text—Your Highness knows it, 'Whosoever

Looketh after a woman,' would not grace The Prince of Spain. You are happy in him there,

Chaste as your Grace!

Mary. I am happy in him there.

Renard. And would be altogether happy, Madam,

So that your sister were but look'd to closer.

You have sent her from the court, but then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales, But hatch you some new treason in the woods.

Mary. We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping,

And then if caught, to the Tower.

Renard. The Tower! the block!

The word has turn'd your Highness pale; the thing

Was no such scarecrow in your father's time.

I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! . I do think

To save your crown that it must come to this.

Mary. I love her not, but all the people love her,

And would not have her sent to the Tower.

Renard. Not yet; but your old Traitor of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland to death,

The sentence having past upon them all, Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guildford Dailey,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear your crown?

Mary. Dared? nay, not so; the child obey'd her father.

Spite of her tears her father forced it on her.

Renard. Good Madam, when the Roman wish'd to reign,

He slew not him alone who wore the purple,

But his assessor in the throne, perchance A child more innocent than Lady Jane.

Mary. I am English Queen, not Roman Empress.

Renard. Yet too much mercy is a want of mercy,

And waste more life. Stamp out the fire, or this

Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn the throne.

Where you should sit with Philip: he will not come

Till she be gone.

Mary. Indeed, if that were true— But I must say farewell. I am somewhat faint

With our long talk. The Queen, I am not Queen.

Of mine own heart, which every now and then

Beats me half dead: yet stay, this golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it me,
 And I have broken with my father—
 take
 And wear it as memorial of a morning
 Which found me full of foolish doubts,
 and leaves me
 As hopeful.

Renard (aside). Whew—the folly of
 all follies
 Is to be love-sick for a shadow. (*aloud*)
 Madam,
 This chains me to your service, not with
 gold,
 But dearest links of love. Farewell, and
 trust me,
 Philip is yours. [*Exit.*
Mary. Mine—but not yet all mine.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Your Council is in Session,
 please your Majesty.
Mary. Sir, let them sit. I must have
 time to breathe.
 No, say I come. (*Exit Usher.*) I won
 by boldness once.
 The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to
 Flanders.
 I would not ; but a hundred miles I rode,
 Sent out my letters, call'd my friends
 together,
 Struck home and won.
 And when the Council would not crown
 me—thought
 To bind me first by oaths I could not
 keep,
 And keep with Christ and conscience—
 was it boldness
 Or weakness that won there? when I,
 their Queen,
 Cast myself down upon my knees before
 them,
 And those hard men brake into woman
 tears,

Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that
 passion
 Gave me my Crown.

Enter ALICE.

Girl ; hast thou ever heard
 Slanders against Prince Philip in our
 Court?

Alice. What slanders? I, your Grace ;
 no, never.

Mary. Nothing?

Alice. Never, your Grace.

Mary. See that you neither hear them
 nor repeat!

Alice (aside). Good Lord! but I have
 heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—mum!
 Why comes that old fox-Fleming back
 again?

Enter RENARD.

Renard. Madam, I scarce had left
 your Grace's presence
 Before I chanced upon the messenger
 Who brings that letter which we waited
 for—

The formal offer of Prince Philip's hand.
 It craves an instant answer, Ay or No?

Mary. An instant Ay or No! the
 Council sits.

Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your High-
 ness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[*Exit into the Council Chamber.*

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master
 Renard,
 If you have falsely painted your fine
 Prince ;
 Praised, where you should have blamed
 him, I pray God
 No woman ever love you, Master Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan at
night

As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

Renard. My pretty maiden, tell me,
did you ever

Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Renard. Not prettily put? I mean,
my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty
man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what
then?

Renard. Then, pretty maiden, you
should know that whether

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to fan

A kindled fire.

Alice. According to the song.

His friends would praise him, I believed 'em,

His foes would blame him, and I scorn'd 'em,

His friends—as Angels I received 'em,

His foes—the Devil had suborn'd 'em.

Renard. Peace, pretty maiden.

I hear them stirring in the Council
Chamber.

Lord Paget's 'Ay' is sure—who else?
and yet,

They are all too much at odds to close at
once

In one full-throated No! Her Highness
comes.

Enter MARY.

Alice. How deathly pale!—a chair,
your Highness.

[*Bringing one to the Queen.*]

Renard. Madam,

The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philli is all mine.

[*Sinks into chair, half fainting.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ALINGTON CASTLE.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I durst not hear from
Carew or the Duke

Of Satelek, and till then I should not move.

The Duke hath gone to Leicester; Carew
stirs

In Devon: that fine porcelain Courtenay,
Save that he fears he might be crack'd in
using,

(I have known a semi-madman in my time
So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon too.

Enter WILLIAM.

News abroad, William?

William. None so new, Sir Thomas,
and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new
news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no
old news that all men hate it. Old Sir
Thomas would have hated it. The bells
are ringing at Maidstone. Doesn't your
worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come to
reign again.

Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's no
call

As yet for me; so in this pass, before
The mine be tried, it were a good work
To string my father's sonnets, left about
Like loosely-sown seed, in his orchard,
And head them with a better rhyme of
mine.

To grace his nursery.

Wyatt. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas?
He was a fine courtier, he; Queen Anne
loved him. All the women loved him.
I loved him, I was in Spain with him.
I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep
in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But that couldst thou drink in
Spain if I remember.

William. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

William. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas. [*Exit.*]

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more
His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,
To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song. The sire begets
Not half his likeness in the son. I fail
Where he was fullest: yet—to write it down. [*He writes.*]

Re-enter WILLIAM.

William. There *is* news, there *is* news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the Queen's down, and the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.
Say for ten thousand ten—and pothouse knaves,
Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

William. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Knyvett. Look you, Master Wyatt, Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will speak

When I and thou and all rebellions lie
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies
you know
For ages.

Knyvett. Tut, your sonnet's a flying ant,

Wing'd for a moment.

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work,
[*Tearing the paper.*]

It lies there in six pieces at your feet;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Knyvett. If you can carry your head
upon your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it off
my shoulders,
And sonnet-making's safer.

Knyvett. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you will.
Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes,
ears, brains?

This Philip and the black-faced swarms
of Spain,

The hardest, cruellest people in the world,
Come locusting upon us, eat us up,
Confiscate lands, goods, money—Wyatt,
Wyatt,

Wake, or the stout old island will become
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar for
you

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of them
—more—

All arm'd, waiting a leader; there's no
glory

Like his who saves his country: and you
sit

Sing-songing here; but, if I'm any judge,
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,
As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic
As an honest friend: you stroke me on
one cheek,

Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,
Antony!

You know I know all this. I must not
move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.

I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Knyvett (*showing a paper*). But here's
some Hebrew. Faith, I half
forgot it.

Look; can you make it English? A
strange youth

suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,

'Wyatt.'

And whisking round a corner, show'd his
back

Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha! Courtenay's cipher.

[*Reads*.

'Sir Peter Carew fled to France: it is
thought the Duke will be taken. I am
with you still; but, for appearance sake,
stay with the Queen. Gardiner knows,
but the Council are all at odds, and the
Queen hath no force for resistance.
Move, if you move, at once.'

Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke taken?
Down scabbard, and out sword! and let
Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.

No; not that;

But we will teach Queen Mary how to reign.

Who are those that shout below there?

Knyvett. Why, some fifty

That follow'd me from Penenden Heath
in hope

To hear you speak.

Wyatt. Open the window, *Knyvett*;
The mine is fired, and I will speak to them.

Men of Kent; England of England;
you that have kept your old customs
upright, while all the rest of England
bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause
that hath brought us together is not the
cause of a county or a shire, but of this

England, in whose crown our Kent is the
fairest jewel. Philip shall not wed Mary;
and ye have called me to be your leader.
I know Spain. I have been there with
my father; I have seen them in their own
land; have marked the haughtiness of
their nobles; the cruelty of their priests.
If this man marry our Queen, however
the Council and the Commons may fence
round his power with restriction, he will
be King, King of England, my masters;
and the Queen, and the laws, and the
people, his slaves. What? shall we have
Spain on the throne and in the parlia-
ment; Spain in the pulpit and on the
law-bench; Spain in all the great offices
of state; Spain in our ships, in our forts,
in our houses, in our beds?

Council. No! no! no Spain!

William. No Spain in our beds—that
were worse than all. I have been there
with old Sir Thomas, and the beds I
know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must
we levy war against the Queen's Grace?

Wyatt. No, my friend; war for the
Queen's Grace—to save her from herself
and Philip—war against Spain. And
think not we shall be alone—thousands
will flock to us. The Council, the Court
itself, is on our side. The Lord Chancel-
lor himself is on our side. The King of
France is with us; the King of Denmark
is with us; the world is with us—war
against Spain! And if we move not now,
yet it will be known that we have moved;
and if Philip come to be King, O, my
God! the rope, the rack, the thumb-screw,
the stake, the fire. If we move not now,
Spain moves, bribes our nobles with her
gold, and crosses, crosses stake-like about
our legs till we cannot move at all; and
ye know, my masters, that wherever

Spain hath ruled she hath wither'd all
beneath her. Look at the New World—
a paradise made hell; the red man, that
good helpless creature, starved, maim'd,
flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried
alive, worried by dogs; and here, nearer
home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples,
Lombardy. I say no more—only this,
their lot is yours. Forward to London
with me! forward to London! If ye
love your liberties or your skins, forward
to London!

Crowd. Forward to London! A
Wyatt! a Wyatt!

Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take
the guns

From out the vessels lying in the river.
Then on.

A Peasant. Ay, but I fear we be too
few, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. Not many yet. The world as
yet, my friend,

Is not half-waked; but every parish
tower

Shall clang and clash alarum as we pass,
And pour along the land, and swoll'n and fed
With indraughts and side-currents, in full
force

Roll upon London.

Crowd. A Wyatt! a Wyatt! Forward!

Knyvett. Wyatt, shall we proclaim
Elizabeth?

Wyatt. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

Knyvett. Or Lady Jane?

Wyatt. No, poor soul; no.

Ah, gray old castle of Alington, green field
Beside the brimming Medway, it may
chance

That I shall never look upon you more.

Knyvett. Come, now, you're sonnet-
ting again.

Wyatt. Not I.

I'll have my head set higher in the state;

Or—if the Lord God will it—on the stake.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (The Lord Mayor),
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, SIR
RALPH BAGENHALL, ALDERMEN and
CITIZENS.

White. I trust the Queen comes hither
with her guards.

Howard. Ay, all in arms.

[*Several of the citizens move hastily out
of the hall.*]

Why do they hurry out there?

White. My Lord, cut out the rotten
from your apple,

Your apple eats the better. Let them go.

They go like those old Pharisees in John
Convicted by their conscience, arrant
cowards,

Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

Howard. In some few minutes.
She will address your guilds and com-
panies.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for
her.

But help her in this exigency, make
Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man
This day in England.

White. I am Thomas White.

Few things have fail'd to which I set my
will.

I do my most and best.

Howard. You know that after
The Captain Brett, who went with your
train bands

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to him
With all his men, the Queen in that
distress

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the
traitor,

Feigning to treat with him about her marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said.

White. He'd sooner be

While this same marriage question was being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—and demanded

Possession of her person and the Tower.

Howard. And four of her poor

Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

White. I know it. What do and say

Your Council at this hour?

Howard. I will trust you.

We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council,

The Parliament as well, are troubled waters ;

And yet like waters of the fen they know not

Which way to flow. All hangs on her address,

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

White. How look'd the city

When now you past it? Quiet?

Howard. Like our Council,

Your city is divided. As we past,

Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were citizens

Stood each before his shut-up booth, and look'd

As grim and grave as from a funeral.

And here a knot of ruffians all in rage,

With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a young mother,

Her face on flame, her red hair all blown back,

She shrilling 'Wyatt,' while the boy she held

Mimick'd and piped her 'Wyatt,' as red as she

In hair and cheek ; and almost elbowing her,

So close they stood, another, made as death,

And white as her own milk ; her babe in arms

Had felt the faltering of his mother's heart,

And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious

Catholic,

Mumbling and mixing up in his scared prayers

Heaven and earth's Maries ; over his bow'd shoulder

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-hating beast,

A haggard Anabaptist. Many such groups.

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Courtenay,

Nay the Queen's right to reign—fore God, the rogues—

Were freely buzz'd among them. So I say

Your city is divided, and I fear

One scruple, this or that way, of success

Would turn it thither. Wherefore now the Queen

In this low pulse and palsy of the state,

Bid me to tell you that she counts on you

And on myself as her two hands : on you,

In your own city, as her right, my Lord,

For you are loyal.

White. Am I Thomas White?

One word before she comes. Elizabeth—

Her name is much abused among these traitors.

Where is she? She is loved by all of us.

I scarce have heart to mangle in this matter,

If she should be mistreated.

Howard. No ; she shall not.

The Queen had written her word to come to court :

Methought I smelt out Renard in the
letter,
And fearing for her, sent a secret missive,
Which told her to be sick. Happily or
not,
It found her sick indeed.

White. God send her well ;
Here comes her Royal Grace.

Enter Guards, MARY, and GARDINER.

*SIR THOMAS WHITE leads her to a
raised seat on the dais.*

White. I, the Lord Mayor, and these
our companies
And guilds of London, gathered here,
beseech
Your Highness to accept our lowliest
thanks
For your most princely presence ; and we
pray
That we, your true and loyal citizens,
From your own royal lips, at once may
know
The wherefore of this coming, and so learn
Your royal will, and do it.—I, Lord
Mayor
Of London, and our guilds and companies.
Mary. In mine own person am I come
to you,
To tell you what indeed ye see and know,
How traitorously these rebels out of Kent
Have made strong head against ourselves
and you.
They would not have me wed the Prince
of Spain ;
That was their pretext—so they spake at
first—
But we sent divers of our Council to them,
And by their answers to the question ask'd,
It doth appear this marriage is the least
Of all their quarrel.
They have betrayed the treason of their
hearts :

Seek to possess our person; hold our
Tower,
Place and displace our councillors, and use
Both us and them according as they will.
Now what am I ye know right well—your
Queen ;
To whom, when I was wedded to the realm
And the realm's laws (the spousal ring
whereof,

Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
Upon this finger), ye did promise full
Allegiance and obedience to the death.
Ye know my father was the rightful heir
Of England, and his right came down to
me,

Corroborate by your acts of Parliament :
And as ye were most loving unto him,
So doubtless will ye show yourselves to me.
Wherefore, ye will not brook that anyone
Should seize our person, occupy our state,
More specially a traitor so presumptuous
As this same Wyatt, who hath tamper'd
with

A public ignorance, and, under colour
Of such a cause as hath no colour, seeks
To bend the laws to his own will, and yield
Full scope to persons rascal and forlorn,
To make free spoil and havock of your
goods.

Now as your Prince, I say,
I, that was never mother, cannot tell
How mothers love their children ; yet,
methinks,

A prince as naturally may love his people
As these their children ; and be sure your
Queen

So loves you, and so loving, needs must
deem

This love by you return'd as heartily ;
And thro' this common knot and bond of
love,

Doubt not they will be speedily over-
thrown.

As to this marriage, ye shall understand
We made thereto no treaty of ourselves,
And set no foot theretoward unadvised
Of all our Privy Council ; furthermore,
This marriage had the assent of those to
whom

The king, my father, did commit his trust ;
Who not alone esteem'd it honourable,
But for the wealth and glory of our realm,
And all our loving subjects, most expedient.

As to myself,

I am not so set on wedlock as to choose
But where I list, nor yet so amorous
That I must needs be husbanded ; I thank
God,

I have lived a virgin, and I noway doubt
But that with God's grace, I can live so
still.

Yet if it might please God that I should
leave

Some fruit of mine own body after me,
To be your king, ye would rejoice thereat,
And it would be your comfort, as I trust ;
And truly, if I either thought or knew
This marriage should bring loss or danger
to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way
This royal state of England, I would never
Consent thereto, nor marry while I live ;
Moreover, if this marriage should not
seem,

Before our own High Court of Parliament,
To be of rich advantage to our realm,
We will refrain, and not alone from this,
Likewise from any other, out of which
Looms the least chance of peril to our
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your lawful
Prince

Stand fast against our enemies and yours,
And fear them not. I fear them not. My

Lord,

Leave Lord William Howard in your city,
To guard and keep you whole and safe
from all

The spoil and booty gain'd by these
rebels,

Who mouth and foam against the Prince
of Spain.

Voices. Long live Queen Mary !

Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !

White. Three voices from our guilds
and companies !

You are shy and proud like Englishmen,
my masters,

And will not trust your voices. Under-
stand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast
herself

On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to fall
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,

And finds you statues. Speak at once—
and all !

For whom ?

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will ;
The Queen of England—or the Kentish
Squire ?

I know you loyal. Speak ! in the name
of God !

The Queen of England or the rabble of
Kent ?

The reeking dungfork master of the mace !
Your havings wasted by the scythe and
spade—

Your rights and charters hallow'd into
slush—

Your houses fired—your gutters bubbling
blood—

Acclamation. No ! No ! The Queen !
the Queen !

White. Your Highness hears

This burst and hiss of loyal harmony,

And how we each and all of us abhor

The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt

Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now make
oath

To raise your Highness thirty thousand
men,

And arm and strike as with one hand, and
brush

This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea
That might have leapt upon us unawares.
Swear with me, noble fellow-citizens, all,
With all your trades, and guilds, and
companies.

Citizens. We swear!

Mary. We thank your Lordship and
your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*]

White. I trust this day, thro' God, I
have saved the crown.

First Alderman. Ay, so my Lord of
Pembroke in command

Of all her force be safe; but there are
doubts.

Second Alderman. I hear that Gar-
diner, coming with the Queen,
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his
saddle-bow,

As if to win the man by flattering him.

Is he so safe to fight upon her side?

First Alderman. If not, there's no
man safe.

White. Yes, Thomas White.

I am safe enough; no man need flatter me.

Second Alderman. Nay, no man need;
but did you mark our Queen?

The colour freely play'd into her face,
And the half sight which makes her look
so stern,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world of
hers,

To read our faces; I have never seen her
So queenly or so goodly.

White. Courage, sir,

That makes or man or woman look their
goodliest.

Die like the torn fox dumb, but never
whine

Like that poor heart, Northumberland, at
the block.

Bagenhall. The man had children, and
he whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-hearted,
else

Should we so doat on courage, were it
commoner?

The Queen stands up, and speaks for her
own self;

And all men cry, She is queenly, she is
goodly.

Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord
Mayor here,

By his own rule, he hath been so bold
to-day,

Should look more goodly than the rest of
us.

White. Goodly? I feel most goodly
heart and hand,

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and all
Kent.

Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it: a
jest

In time of danger shows the pulses even.

Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but
sad.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for yourself,
Tho' all the world should bay like winter
wolves.

Bagenhall. Who knows? the man is
proven by the hour.

White. The man should make the
hour, not this the man;

And Thomas White will prove this
Thomas Wyatt,

And he will prove an Iden to this Cade,
And he will play the Walworth to this
Wat;

Come, sirs, we prate; hence all—gather
your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to Southwark ;

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into the Thames,

And see the citizens arm'd. Good day ; good day. [Exit White.

Bagenhall. One of much outdoor bluster.

Howard. For all that,

Must honest, brave, and skilful ; and his wealth

A fountain of perennial aims—his fault

So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

Bagenhall. Yet thoroughly to believe in one's own self,

So one's own self be thorough, were to do great things, my Lord.

Howard. It may be.

Bagenhall. I have heard one of your Council flee and jeer at him.

Howard. The nursery-cocker'd child will jeer at aught

That may seem strange beyond his nursery.

The statesman that shall jeer and flee at men,

Makes enemies for himself and for his king ;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man

Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool ;

And if he see the man and still will jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to the State.

Who is he ? let me shun him.

Bagenhall. Nay, my Lord,

He is damn'd enough already.

Howard. I must set

The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

Bagenhall. 'Who knows ?' I am for

England. But who knows,

That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope,

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen ?

[Exit.

SCENE III.—LONDON BRIDGE.

Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT and BRETT.

Wyatt. Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us

Thou criest 'A Wyatt !' and flying to our side

Left his all bare, for which I love thee, Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I can give.

For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge ;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear we cannot.

Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

Wyatt. Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett,

And scared the gray old porter and his wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and saw

They had hewn the drawbridge down into the river.

It felt as thick as death ; and that same tide

Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou saidst,

Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard

By torchlight, and his guard ; four guns gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths ; had Howard spied me there

And made them speak, as well he might have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell you this.

What shall we do ?

Brett. On somehow. To go back
Were to lose all.

Wyatt. On over London Bridge
We cannot : stay we cannot ; there is
ordnance
On the White Tower and on the Devil's
Tower,
And pointed full at Southwark ; we must
round
By Kingston Bridge.

Brett. Ten miles about.

Wyatt. Ev'n so.
But I have notice from our partisans
Within the city that they will stand
by us
If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-
morrow.

Enter one of WYATT'S men.

Man. Sir Thomas, I've found this
paper ; pray your worship read it ; I
know not my letters ; the old priests
taught me nothing.

Wyatt (reads). 'Whosoever will ap-
prehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall
have a hundred pounds for reward.'

Man. Is that it ? That's a big lot of
money.

Wyatt. Ay, ay, my friend ; not read
it ? 'tis not written
Half plain enough. Give me a piece of
paper !

[Writes 'THOMAS WYATT' large.]
There, any man can read that.

[Sticks it in his cap.]

Brett. But that's foolhardy.

Wyatt. No ! boldness, which will
give my followers boldness.

Enter MAN with a prisoner.

Man. We found him, your worship, a
plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house ;
he says he's a poor gentleman.

Wyatt. Gentleman ! a thief ! Go
hang him. Shall we make
Those that we come to serve our sharpest
foes ?

Brett. Sir Thomas—

Wyatt. Hang him, I say.

Brett. Wyatt, but now you promised
me a boon.

Wyatt. Ay, and I warrant this fine
fellow's life.

Brett. Ev'n so ; he was my neighbour
once in Kent.

He's poorenough, has drunk and gambled
out

All that he had, and gentleman he was.
We have been glad together ; let him
live.

Wyatt. He has gambled for his life,
and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy
poor gentleman !

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight,
Or I will dig thee with my dagger.

Away

Women and children !

Enter a Crowd of WOMEN and Children.

First Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir
Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas,
or you'll make the White Tower a black
'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the
death on us ; and you'll set the Devil's
Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our
bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

Second Woman. Don't ye now go to
think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

Third Woman. No, we know that ye
be come to kill the Queen, and we'll
pray for you all on our bended knees.
But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the
Queen here, Sir Thomas ; look ye, here's
little Dickon, and little Robin, and little
Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—

and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen further off, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen

Or here or there : I come to save you all, And I'll go further off.

crowd. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

Wyatt. Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston, forward!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN THE GATEHOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD, LADIES.

Alice. O madam, if Lord Pembroke should be false?

Mary. No, girl; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland.

At the park gate he hovers with our guards.

These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter MESSENGER.

Messenger. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards

And gone to Ludgate.

Gardiner. Madam, I much fear that all is lost; but we can save your Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you, There yet is time, take boat and pass to Windsor.

Mary. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

Gardiner. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

Mary. I shall but lose their possession to the Tower.

Cry within. The traitor! treason! Pembroke!

Ladies. Treason! treason!

Mary. Peace.

False to Northumberland, is he false to me?

Be my witness, Renard, that I live and die The true and faithful bride of Henry—a sound

Of feet and voices thickening—blows—

Hark, there is battle at the palace gates, And I will out upon the gallery.

Ladies. No, no, your Grace; see there the arrows flying.

Mary. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not fear.

[*Exit out on the gallery.*]

The guards are all driven in, skulk into corners

Like rabbits to their holes. A guardless guard

Truly; shame on them! they have shut the gates!

Enter SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

Southwell. The youth, please your Grace, hath shut the gates

On friend and foe. Your gentlemen—arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry To have the gates set wide again, and they With their good battle-axes will do your grace Against all traitors.

Mary. They are the flowers of England; set the gates wide.

[*Exit Southwell.*]

Enter COFFINERS.

Coffiners. All lost, all lost, all yielded! A barge, a barge!

The Queen must to the Tower.

Mary. Whence come you, sir?
Courtenay. From Charing Cross; the
 rebels broke us there,
 And I sped hither with what haste I might
 To save my royal cousin.

Mary. Where is Pembroke?
Courtenay. I left him somewhere in
 the thick of it.

Mary. Left him and fled; and thou
 that would'st be King,
 And hast nor heart nor honour. I myself
 Will down into the battle and there bide
 The upshot of my quarrel, or die with those
 That are no cowards and no Courtenays.

Courtenay. I do not love your Grace
 should call me coward.

Enter another MESSENGER.

Messenger. Over, your Grace, all
 crush'd; the brave Lord William
 Thrust him from Ludgate, and the traitor
 flying
 To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice
 Berkeley
 Was taken prisoner.

Mary. To the Tower with him!
Messenger. 'Tis said he told Sir
 Maurice there was one
 Cognisant of this, and party thereunto,
 My Lord of Devon.

Mary. To the Tower with him!
Courtenay. O la, the Tower, the
 Tower, always the Tower,
 I shall grow into it—I shall be the Tower.

Mary. Your Lordship may not have
 so long to wait.
 Remove him!

Courtenay. La, to whistle out my life,
 And carve my coat upon the walls again!
 [*Exit Courtenay guarded.*]

Messenger. Also this Wyatt did confess
 the Princess
 Cognisant thereof, and party thereunto.

Mary. What? whom—whom did you
 say?

Messenger. Elizabeth,
 Your Royal sister.

Mary. To the Tower with her!
 My foes are at my feet and I am Queen.
 [*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.*]

Gardiner (rising). There let them lie,
 your footstool! (*Aside.*) Can I
 strike

Elizabeth?—not now and save the life
 Of Devon: if I save him, he and his
 Are bound to me—may strike hereafter.

(*Aloud.*) Madam,
 What Wyatt said, or what they said he said,
 Cries of the moment and the street—

Mary. He said it.
Gardiner. Your courts of justice will
 determine that.

Renard (advancing). I trust by this
 your Highness will allow
 Some spice of wisdom in my telling you.
 When last we talk'd, that Philip would
 not come
 Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke of
 Suffolk,
 And Lady Jane had left us.

Mary. They shall die.
Renard. And your so loving sister?

Mary. She shall die.
 My foes are at my feet, and Philip King.
 [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN GRACE-
 CHURCH,

*Painted with the Nine Worthies, among
 them King Henry VIII. holding a book,
 on it inscribed 'Verbum Dei.'*

*Enter SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and SIR
 THOMAS STAFFORD.*

Bagenhall. A hundred here and
 hundreds hang'd in Kent.

The tigress had unsheath'd her nails at last,

And Kenard and the Chancellor sharpen'd them.

In every London street a gibbet stood.
They are down to-day. Here by this house was one;

The traitor husband dangled at the door,
And when the traitor wife came out for bread

To still the petty treason therewithin,
Her cap would brush his heels.

Stafford. It is Sir Kniph,
And muttering to himself as heretofore—
sa, see you aught up yonder?

Bagenhall. I miss something.
The tree that only bears dead fruit is gone.

Stafford. What tree, sir?
Bagenhall. Well, the tree in Virgil, sir,
That bears not its own apples.

Stafford. What? the gallows?
Bagenhall. Sir, this dead fruit was ripening overmuch,
And had to be removed lest living Spain
Should sicken at dead England.

Stafford. No, so dead,
but that a shock may rouse her.

Bagenhall. I believe
Sir Thomas Stafford?

Stafford. I am ill disguised.
Bagenhall. Well, are you not in peril here?

Stafford. I think so.
I came to feel the pulse of England,
whether

It beats hard at this marriage. Did you see it?

Bagenhall. Stafford, I am a sad man
and a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall
been reading some old book, with mine
old hound

Could I be my heart's, and mine old Jack
of wine

Beside me, than have seen it: yet I saw it.
Stafford. Good, was it splendid?

Bagenhall. Ay, it look'd not badly.
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cavaliers,
Some six or seven Billings, diamonds,
pearls

That royal commonplace use, cloth'd gold,
could make it so.

Stafford. And what was Mary's attire?
Bagenhall. Good faith, I was too
sorry for the woman

To mark the dress. She wore red shoes!
Stafford. Red shoes?

Bagenhall. Scarlet, as if her feet were
wash'd in blood,

As if she had waded in it.
Stafford. Were your eyes
so foolish that you look'd no higher?

Bagenhall. A diamond,
And Philip's gift, he proof of Philip's love,
Who had not any for *my*—tho' a true
man,

blas'd false upon her heart.

Stafford. Is this your Prince—
Bagenhall. Nay, he is King, you
know, the King of Naples.

The father o'bed Naples, then the son
Being a King, might wed a Queen—O he
I found to *trouise*—white with his trunk-
less,

Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a
collar,

Gold, blue with diamonds; hanging
down from his

The Golden Plass—and round his knee
a napkin.

Our English classes staid'd with great
swords,

Robes, I know not what. Have you had
enough

Of all this gear?

Stafford. Ay, since you hate the telling
it.

How look'd the Queen?

Bagenhall. No fairer for her jewels.

And I could see that as the new-made
couple

Came from the Minster, moving side by side
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon

She cast on him a vassal smile of love,
Which Philip with a glance of some
distaste,

Or so methought, return'd. I may be
wrong, sir.

This marriage will not hold.

Stafford. I think with you.

The King of France will help to break it.

Bagenhall. France!

We once had half of France, and hurl'd
our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England now
Is but a ball chuck'd between France and
Spain,

His in whose hand she drops; Harry of
Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to
stand,

Could Harry have foreseen that all our
nobles

Would perish on the civil slaughter-field,
And leave the people naked to the crown,
And the crown naked to the people; the
crown

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regimen
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I
think,

Never to rise again.

Stafford. You are too black-blooded.

I'd make a move myself to hinder that:
I know some lusty fellows there in France.

Bagenhall. You would but make us
weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he fail'd,
And strengthen'd Philip.

Stafford. Did not his last breath
Clear Courtenay and the Princess from
the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

Bagenhall. Ay, but then

What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing:
We have no men among us. The new
Lords

Are quieted with their sop of Abbeylands,
And ev'n before the Queen's face Gardiner
buys them

With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith,
no courage!

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, Northum-
berland,

The leader of our Reformation, knelt
And blubber'd like a lad, and on the
scaffold

Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

Stafford. I swear you do your country
wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there,
Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit
it out

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain
already.

The French king winks at it. An hour
will come

When they will sweep her from the seas.
No men?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true man?

Is not Lord William Howard a true man?

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-
blooded:

And I, by God, believe myself a man.

Ay, even in the church there is a man—
Cranmer.

Fly would he not, when all men bad him
fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the
Pope!

There's a brave man, if any.

Bagenhall. Ay; if it hold.

Crowd (singing, an). God save their
Graces!

Stafford. Bagenhall, I see

The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*)

They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as herring-
shoals.

Bagenhall. Be limpets to this pillar,
or we are torn

Down the strong wave of brawlers.

Crowd. God save their Graces!

[*Procession of Trumpeters, Fawcins-
men, &c.; then Spanish and
Flemish Nobles intermingled.*

Stafford. Worth seeing, Bagenhall!

These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the
long-face there,

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

Bagenhall. The Duke

Of Alva, an iron soldier.

Stafford. And the Dutchman,

Now laughing at some jest?

Bagenhall. William of Orange,

William the Silent.

Stafford. Why do they call him so?

Bagenhall. He keeps, they say, some
secret that may cost

Philip his life.

Stafford. But then he looks so
merry.

Bagenhall. I cannot tell you why they
call him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended
by Peers of the Realm, Officers of
State, &c. Cannon shot off.*

Crowd. Philip and Mary, Philip and
Mary!

Long live the King and Queen, Philip
and Mary!

Stafford. They smile as if content with
one another

Bagenhall. A mile almost th' oft a
[scowl] at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*

First Citizen. I thought this Philip
had been one of those black devils of
Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

Second Citizen. Not red like Isaac-
riot's.

First Citizen. Like a carrot's, as thou
say'st, and English carrot's better than
Spanish licorice: but I thought he was a
beast.

Third Citizen. Certain I had heard
that every Spaniard carries a tail like a
devil under his trunk-hose.

Taylor. Ay, but see what trunk-hoses!
Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd none
such. They make amends for the tails.

Fourth Citizen. Tut! every Spanish
priest will tell you that all English heretics
have tails.

Fifth Citizen. Death and the Devil—
if he find I have one—

Fourth Citizen. For! thou hast call'd
them up! here they come—a pale horse
for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter GARDINER (attending back from the
procession).*

Gardiner. Knave, wilt thou wear thy
cap before the Queen?

Man. My lord, I stand as requested
among the crowd

I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

Gardiner. Knock off his cap there,
some of you about him!

See there be others that can use their
hands.

Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

Man. No, my Lord, no.

Gardiner. Thy name, thou knave?

Man. I am nobody, my Lord.

Gardiner (*shouting*). God's passion!
 knave, thy name?
Man. I have ears to hear.
Gardiner. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee
 ears to hear.
 Find out his name and bring it to me (*to*
Attendant).
Attendant. Ay, my Lord.
Gardiner. Knave, thou shalt lose thine
 ears and find thy tongue,
 And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.
 [*Coming before the Conduit*.
 The conduit painted—the nine worthies
 —ay!
 But then what's here? King Harry with
 a scroll.
 Ha—Verbum Dei—verbum—word of
 God!
 God's passion! do you know the knave
 that painted it?
Attendant. I do, my Lord.
Gardiner. Tell him to paint it out,
 And put some fresh device in lieu of it—
 A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir;
 ha?
 There is no heresy there.
Attendant. I will, my Lord;
 The man shall paint a pair of gloves. I
 am sure
 (Knowing the man) he wrought it igno-
 rantly,
 And not from any malice.
Gardiner. Word of God
 In English! over this the brainless loons
 That cannot spell Esaias from St. Paul,
 Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out
 and flare
 Into rebellions. I'll have their bibles
 burnt.
 The bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow,
 what!
 Stand staring at me! shout, you gaping
 rogue!

Man. I have, my Lord, shouted till I
 am hoarse.
Gardiner. What hast thou shouted,
 knave?
Man. Long live Queen Mary!
Gardiner. Knave, there be two.
 There be both King and Queen,
 Philip and Mary. Shout!
Man. Nay, but, my Lord,
 The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.
Gardiner. Shout, then,
 Mary and Philip!
Man. Mary and Philip!
Gardiner. Now,
 Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout
 for mine!
 Philip and Mary!
Man. Must it be so, my Lord?
Gardiner. Ay, knave.
Man. Philip and Mary!
Gardiner. I distrust thee.
 Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.
 What is thy name?
Man. Sanders.
Gardiner. What else?
Man. Zerubbabel.
Gardiner. Where dost thou live?
Man. In Cornhill.
Gardiner. Where, knave, where?
Man. Sign of the Talbot.
Gardiner. Come to me to-morrow.—
 Rascal!—this land is like a hill of fire,
 One crater opens when another shuts.
 But so I get the laws against the heretic,
 Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William
 Howard,
 And others of our Parliament, revived,
 I will show fire on my side—stake and
 fire—
 Sharp work and short. The knaves are
 easily cow'd.
 Follow their Majesties.

[*Exit. The crowd following.*]

Bagenhall. As proud as Becket.

Stafford. You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?

Bagenhall. No—murder fathers murder: but I say

There is no man—there was one woman with us—

It was a sin to love her married, dead

I cannot choose but love her.

Stafford. Lady Jane?

Cried (going off). God save their Graces!

Stafford. Did you see her die?

Bagenhall. No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded—true enough

Her dark dead blood is in my heart with mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope

Her dark dead blood that ever moves with mine

Will stir the living tongue and make the cry.

Stafford. Yet doubtless you can tell me how she died?

Bagenhall. Seventeen—and knew eight languages—in music

Peerless—her needle perfect, and her learning

Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek, so modest,

So wife-life humble to the trivial boy

Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have heard

She would not take a last farewell of him,

She fear'd it might unman him for his end.

She could not be unmann'd—no, nor outwoman'd—

Seventeen—a rose of grace!

Girl never breathed to rival such a rose;

Rose never blew that equall'd such a bud.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. She came upon the scaffold,

And said she was condemn'd to die for treason;

She had but follow'd the decree of those
Her nearest kin: she thought they knew the laws.

But for herself, she knew but little law,

And nothing of the titles to the crown;

She had no desire for that, and wrang her hands,

And trusted God would save her thro' the blood

Of Jesus Christ alone.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. Then knelt and said the Miserere Mei—

But all in English, mark you; rose again,

And, when the headsman pray'd to be forgiven,

Said 'You will give me my true crown at last,

But do it quickly;' then all wept but she,

Who changed not colour when she saw the block,

But ask'd him, childlike: 'Will you take it off

Before I lay me down?' 'No, maiden,' he said,

Gasping; and when her innocent eyes were bound,

She, with her poor blind hands feeling—
'where is it?

Where is it?'—You must know that which follow'd,

If you have heart to do it!

Cried (withalitanes). God save their Graces!

Stafford. Their Graces, our disgraces!
God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I last was here,

This was against her conscience—would
be murder!

Bagenhall. The 'Thou shalt do no
murder,' which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd
out pale—

She could not make it white—and over
that,

Traced in the blackest text of Hell—
'Thou shalt!'

And sign'd it—Mary!

Stafford. Philip and the Pope

Must have sign'd too. I hear this
Legate's coming

To bring us absolution from the Pope.

The Lords and Commons will bow down
before him—

You are of the house? what will you do,
Sir Ralph?

Bagenhall. And why should I be
bolder than the rest,

Or honester than all?

Stafford. But, sir, if I—

And oversea they say this state of yours
Hath no more mortice than a tower of
cards;

And that a puff would do it—then if I
And others made that move I touch'd
upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and
landing here,

Came with a sudden splendour, shout, and
show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by some
bright

Loud venture, and the people so
unquiet—

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-
ham—

Not for myself, but for the kingdom—
Sir,

I trust that you would fight along with
us.

Bagenhall. No; you would fling your
lives into the gulf.

Stafford. But if this Philip, as he's
like to do,

Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither
To seize upon the forts and fleet, and
make us

A Spanish province; would you not fight
then?

Bagenhall. I think I should fight
then.

Stafford. I am sure of it.

Hist! there's the face coming on here of
one

Who knows me. I must leave you.
Fare you well,

You'll hear of me again.

Bagenhall. Upon the scaffold.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—ROOM IN WHITEHALL
PALACE.

MARY. *Enter* PHILIP and
CARDINAL POLE.

Pole. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Bene-
dicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin,
humblest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the river?

Pole. We had your royal barge, and
that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,
The ripples twinkled at their diamond-
dance,

The boats that follow'd, were as glowing-
gay

As regal gardens; and your flocks of
swans,

As fair and white as angels; and your
shores

Woke in mine eyes the green of Paradise.
My foreign friends, who dream'd as
blanketed

In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as night have flash'd
Upon their lake of Gaulta, free the
Thames :

One voyage by sea was all but miracle :
And here the river flowing from the sea,
Not toward it (for they thought not of
our tides),

seem'd as a happy miracle to make
glide—
In quiet-home your banish'd country-
man.

Mary. We heard that you were sick
in Flanders, cousin.

Pole. A dizziness.

Mary. And how came you
round again ?

Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab
saved her life :

And mine, a little letting of the blood.

Mary. Well? now ?

Pole. Ay, cousin, as the
heathen giant

Had but to touch the ground, his force
return'd—

Thus, after twenty years of banishment,
Feeling my native land beneath my foot,
I said thereto : 'Ah, native land of mine,
Thou art much beholden to this foot of
mine,

Thou hastes with full commission from
the Pope

To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy.
Thou hast disgraced me and attained me,
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return
As Peter, but to bless thee : make me well.'
Nathinks the good land heard me, for to-
day

My heart beats twenty, when I see you,
cousin.

Alc. gentle-souls, give your throats
death,

How oft hath Pope Innocent at Mary's
gate !

And Mary would have risen and set him
in.

Bro. Mary, there were those within the
house

Who would not have it.

Mary. True, good cousin Pole :

And there were also those without the
house

Who would not have it.

Pole. I believe so, cousin.

State-policy and church-policy are con-
joint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.

I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.

Bro. All is well : 'twas ev'n the will of
God,

Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd,
now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting,
'Hail,

Daughter of God, and savor of the faith,
Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui !'

Mary. Ah, heaven !

Pole. Unwell, your Grace ?

Mary. No, cousin, happy

Happy to see you : never yet so happy

Since I was crown'd.

Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget

That long low minster where you gave
your hand

To this great Catholic King.

Willf. Well said, Lord Legate

Mary. Nay, not well said : I thought
of you, my lips.

Ev'n as I spoke.

Willf. Ay, Madam : my Lord Page

Waits to present our Council to the Legate.

So down here, all ; Madam, between me
you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with
boards of cedar,
Our little sister of the Song of Songs !
You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting
here
Between the two most high-set thrones
on earth,
The Emperor's highness happily symbol'd
by
The King your husband, the Pope's
Holiness
By mine own self.

Mary. True, cousin, I am happy.
When will you that we summon both our
houses

To take this absolution from your lips,
And be regather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the bright-
est day
Beheld our rough forefathers break their
Gods,
And clasp the faith in Christ ; but after
that

Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest
day ?

Mary. Then these shall meet upon
St. Andrew's day.

Enter PAGET, who presents the Council.
Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with
my journey,
Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to with-
draw.
To Lambeth ?

Philip. Ay, Lambeth has ousted
Cranmer.
It was not meet the heretic swine should
live
In Lambeth.

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.

Philip. We have had it swept and
garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to enter
in ?

Philip. No, for we trust they parted
in the swine.

Pole. True, and I am the Angel of the
Pope.
Farewell, your Graces.

Philip. Nay, not here—to me
I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the counter-
side ?

Philip. No, my Lord Legate, the
Lord Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but
Lambeth palace,
Henceforth a centre of the living faith.

[*Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, &c.*

Manet Mary.

Mary. He hath awaked ! he hath
awaked !

He stirs within the darkness !
Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to mine
Will cling more close, and those bleak
manners thaw,
That make me shamed and tongue-tied in
my love.

The second Prince of Peace—
The great unborn defender of the Faith,
Who will avenge me of mine enemies—
He comes, and my star rises.
The stormy Wyatts and Northumberlands,
The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,
And all her fieriest partisans—are pale
Before my star !
The light of this new learning wanes and
dies :

The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius fade
Into the deathless hell which is their doom
Before my star !

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to Ind !
His sword shall hew the heretic peoples
down !

His faith shall clothe the world that will
be his,

Like universal air and sunshine! Open,
Ye everlasting gates! The King is here!—
My star, my son!

Enter PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, &c.

Oh, Philip, come with me;
Good news have I to tell you, news to
make

Both of us happy—ay, the Kingdom too.
Say come with me—one moment!

Philip (to Alva). More than that:
There was one here of late—William the
Silent

They call him—he is free enough in talk,
He tells me nothing. You will be, we
trust,

Sometime the viceroy of those provinces—
He must deserve his surname better.

Alva. Ay, sir:

Inherit the Great Silence.

Philip. True; the provinces
Are hard to rule and must be hardly ruled;
Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty rind,
All hollow'd out with stinging heresies;
And for their heresies, Alva, they will
fight;

You must break them or they break you.

Alva (proudly). The first.

Philip. Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine?
[*Exit.*]

Enter THREE PAGES.

First Page. News, mates! a miracle,
a miracle! news!

The bells must ring; Te Deums must be
sung;

The Queen hath felt the motion of her
babe!

Second Page. Ay; but see here!

First Page. See what?

Second Page. This paper, Duchon.

I found it fluttering at the palace gates:—
'The Queen of England is delivered of a
dead dog!'

Third Page. Those are the things
that madden her. Fie upon it!

First Page. Ay; but I hear she hath
a dropsy, lad,

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

Third Page. Fie on her dropsy, —
she have a dropsy!

I know that she was ever sweet to me.

First Page. For thou and thine are
Roman to the core.

Third Page. So thou and thine must
be. Take heed!

First Page. Not I.

And whether this flash of news be false
or true,

So the wine run, and there be revelry.

Content am I. Let all the scepters
clash,

Till the sun dance, as upon LAUREY DAY.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—GREAT HALL IN
WHITEHALL.

*At the far end a dais. On this dais
Alva, two ladies and company for MARY
and PHILIP, another on the right of
Alva for POPE. Under the dais on
POPE'S side, ranged along the wall,
sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along
the wall opposite, all the Temporal.
The Commons sit cross benches in
front, a line of officers to the dais
between them. In the foreground, SIR
RALPH BAGENHALL and other Mem-
bers of the Commons.*

First Member. St. Andrew's day; sit
close, sit close, we are friends.
Is reconciled the word? the Pope again?

It must be thus ; and yet, cocksbody !
how strange

That Gardiner, once so one with all of us
Against this foreign marriage, should
have yielded

So utterly !—strange ! but stranger still
that he,

So fierce against the Headship of the
Pope,

Should play the second actor in this
pageant

That brings him in ; such aameleon he !

Second Member. This Gardiner turn'd
his coat in Henry's time ;

The serpent that hath slough'd will
slough again.

Third Member. Tut, then we all are
serpents.

Second Member. Speak for yourself.

Third Member. Ay, and for Gardiner !
being English citizen,

How should he bear a bridegroom out of
Spain ?

The Queen would have him ! being
English churchman,

How should he bear the headship of the
Pope ?

The Queen would have it ! Statesmen
that are wise

Shape a necessity, as a sculptor clay,

To their own model.

Second Member. Statesmen that are
wise

Take truth herself for model. What say
you ? [*To Sir Ralph Bagenhall.*

Bagenhall. We talk and talk.

First Member. Ay, and what use to
talk ?

Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's
husband,

He's here, and king, or will be—yet
cocksbody !

So hated here ! I watch'd a hive of late ;

My seven-years' friend was with me, my
young boy ;

Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm
behind.

' Philip !' says he. I had to cuff the rogue
For infant treason.

Third Member. But they say that bees,
If any creeping life invade their hive

Too gross to be thrust out, will build him
round,

And bind him in from harming of their
combs.

And Philip by these articles is bound
From stirring hand or foot to wrong the
realm.

Second Member. By bonds of beeswax,
like your creeping thing ;

But your wise bees had stung him first
to death.

Third Member. Hush, hush !
You wrong the Chancellor : the clauses

added
To that same treaty which the emperor

sent us
Were mainly Gardiner's : that no foreigner

Hold office in the household, fleet, forts,
army ;

That if the Queen should die without a
child,

The bond between the kingdoms be
dissolved ;

That Philip should not mix us any way
With his French wars—

Second Member. Ay, ay, but what
security,

Good sir, for this, if Philip—

Third Member. Peace—the Queen,
Philip, and Pole. [*All rise, and stand.*

Enter MARY, PHILIP, and POLE.

[*Gardiner conducts them to the three
chairs of state. Philip sits on the
Queen's left, Pole on her right.*

Cardinal. Our short-lived sun, before
his winter plunge,
Laughs at the last red leaf, and Arcturw's
Day.

Mary. Should not this day be held in
after years
More solemn than of old?

Trump. Madam, my wish
Expresses your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Cardinal. Mine edicts teach your
Graces'; (*aside*) but the Pope—
Can we not have the Catholic church as well
Without as with the Italian? if we cannot,
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,
And ye, my masters, of the lower house,
Do ye stand fast by that which ye
resolved?

Peers. We do.

Cardinal. And be you all one mind to
supplicate
The Legate here for pardon, and acknow-
ledge

The primacy of the Pope?

Peers. We are all one mind.

Cardinal. Then must I play the vassal
to this Pole. [*Aside.*

[*He draws a paper from under his
coat and presents it to the King
and Queen, who look through it
—it returns it to him; then ascends
a tribune, and reads.*

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
And Commons here in Parliament
assembled,

Presenting the whole body of this realm
Of England, and dominions of the same,
Do make most humble suit unto your
Majesties,

In our own name and that of all the state,
That by your gracious means and inter-
cession

Our supplication be established

To Our Lord Cardinal Pole, our love as
Legate.

From our most Holy Father Julius, Pope,
And from the apostolic see of Rome;
And do declare our penitency and grief
For our long rebellion and disobedience,
Either in making laws and ordinances
Against the Holy Father's primacy,
Or else by doing or by speaking ought
Which might impugn or prejudice the
same;

By this our supplication promising,
As well for our own selves as all the
realm,

That now we be and ever shall be quick,
Under and with your Majesties' autho-
rities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies
Towards the abrogation and repeal
Of all such laws and ordinances made;
Whereon we humbly pray your Majesties,
As persons unaffiliated with our offence,
So to set forth this humble suit of ours
That we the rather by your intercession
May from the apostolic see obtain,
Thro' this most reverend Father, absolu-
tion,

And full release from all manner of all
conscience

Of Holy Church that we be fully free,
So that we may, as children penitent,
Be once again received into the bosom
And unity of Universal Church;
And that this whole matter done after
years

May in that unity and obedience
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope
Serve God and both your Majesties.

Peers. Amen. [*All sit.*

[*He again presents the petition to the
King and Queen, who hand it
reverentially to Pole.*

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest day
 that ever smiled
 On England. All her breath should
 incenselike,
 Rise to the heavens in grateful praise of
 Him
 Who now recalls her to His ancient fold.
 Lo ! once again God to this realm hath
 given
 A token of His more especial Grace ;
 For as this people were the first of all
 The islands call'd into the dawning church
 Out of the dead, deep night of heathendom,
 So now are these the first whom God
 hath given
 Grace to repent and sorrow for their
 schism ;
 And if your penitence be not mockery,
 Oh how the blessed angels who rejoice
 Over one saved do triumph at this hour
 In the reborn salvation of a land
 So noble. *[A pause.*

For ourselves we do protest
 That our commission is to heal, not harm ;
 We come not to condemn, but reconcile ;
 We come not to compel, but call again ;
 We come not to destroy, but edify ;
 Nor yet to question things already done ;
 These are forgiven — matters of the past —
 And range with jetsam and with offal
 thrown
 Into the blind sea of forgetfulness. *[A pause.*
 We have reversed the attainder laid on us
 By him who sack'd the house of God ;
 and we,
 Amplier than any field on our poor earth
 Can render thanks in fruit for being sown,
 Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
 A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-fold,
 With heaven for earth.

[Rising, and stretching forth his hands.
All kneel but Sir Ralph Bagenhall,
who rises and remains standing.

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
 With His own blood, and wash'd us from
 our sins,
 To purchase for Himself a stainless bride ;
 He, whom the Father hath appointed
 Head
 Of all his church, He by His mercy
 absolve you ! *[A pause.*
 And we by that authority Apostolic
 Given unto us, his Legate, by the
 Pope,
 Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
 God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon earth,
 Do here absolve you and deliver you
 And every one of you, and all the
 realm
 And its dominions from all heresy,
 All schism, and from all and every
 censure,
 Judgment, and pain accruing thereupon ;
 And also we restore you to the bosom
 And unity of Universal Church.

[Turning to Gardiner.

Our letters of commission will declare
 this plainlier.

[Queen heard sobbing. Cries of
Amen ! Amen ! Some of the
Members embrace one another. All
but Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out
into the neighbouring chapel, whence
is heard the Te Deum.

Bagenhall. We strove against the
 papacy from the first,
 In William's time, in our first Edward's
 time,
 And in my master Henry's time ; but
 now,
 The unity of Universal Church,
 Mary would have it ; and this Gardiner
 follows ;
 The unity of Universal Hell,
 Philip would have it ; and this Gardiner
 follows !

A Parliament of imitative apes !
 Sleep at the gap which Gardiner takes,
 who not
 believes the Pope, nor any of them
 believe—

These spaniel-Spaniard English of the
 time,

Who rub their fawning noses in the dust,
 For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore
 This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I had
 been

I am Spaniard ! I had held my head up
 then.

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
 English.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Sir Ralph Bagenhall !

Bagenhall. What of that ?

Officer. You were the one sole man in
 either house

Who stood upright when both the houses
 fell.

Bagenhall. The houses fell !

Officer. I mean the houses knelt
 before the Legate.

Bagenhall. Do not scruple your
 phrase,

But stretch it wider ; say when England
 fell.

Officer. I say you were the one sole
 man who stood.

Bagenhall. I am the one sole man in
 either house,

For shame in England, I never sat like a son.

Officer. Well, you one man, because
 you stood upright,

For Grace the Queen commands you to
 the Tower.

Bagenhall. As traitor, or as heretic,
 or for what ?

Officer. If any man in any way would
 be

The one man, he shall be so to his cost.

Bagenhall. What ! will she have my
 head ?

Officer. A round one indeed.

Your pardon. [*Exit Officer.*]
 By the river to the Tower. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—WHITEHALL. A ROOM
 IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, FROB. PARROT,
 BONNER, &c.

Mary. The King and I, my Lords,
 now that all traitors

Against our royal state have lost the heads
 Wherewith they plotted in their treason-
 ous malice,

Have talk'd together, and are well agreed
 That those old statutes touching Lollard-
 ism

To bring the heretic to the stake, should be
 No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

One of the Council. Why, what hath
 Master'd Gaslines ? How he rule-

His forelock !

Parrot. I have changed a word with
 him

In coming, and may change a word again.

Gardiner. Methinks your Highness is
 our sun, the King

And you together our two suns in one ;
 And so the beams of both may shine upon
 us.

The faith that seem'd to struggle will kind
 your light,

Lift head, and beam ; yet not light
 alone,

There must be heat—there must be heat
 enough

To scorch and wither heresy to the roots
 For what saith Christ ? " Couped these
 to your fire."

And what saith Paul ? " I would they
 were cut off

That trouble you.' Let the dead letter live !
Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and
grooms

May read it ! so you quash rebellion too,
For heretic and traitor are all one :

Two vipers of one breed—an amphisbœna,
Each end a sting: Let the dead letter burn !

Paget. Yet there be some disloyal
Catholics,

And many heretics loyal ; heretic throats
Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,
But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.
To take the lives of others that are loyal,
And by the churchman's pitiless doom of
fire,

Were but a thankless policy in the crown,
Ay, and against itself ; for there are many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy,
my Lord Paget,

We reck not tho' we lost this crown of
England—

Ay ! tho' it were ten Englands !

Gardiner. Right, your Grace.

Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,
And care but little for the life to be.

Paget. I have some time, for curious-
ness, my Lord,

Watch'd children playing at *their* life to
be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies ;
Such is our time—all times for aught I
know.

Gardiner. We kill the heretics that
sting the soul—

They, with right reason, flies that prick
the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right
reason ; little children !

They kill'd but for their pleasure and the
power

They felt in killing

Gardiner. A spice of Satan, ha !

Why, good ! what then ? granted !—we
are fallen creatures ;

Look to your Bible, Paget ! we are fallen.

Paget. I am but of the laity, my Lord
Bishop,

And may not read your Bible, yet I found
One day, a wholesome scripture, ' Little
children,

Love one another.'

Gardiner. Did you find a scripture,
' I come not to bring peace but a sword ?'

The sword

Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.
Paget,

You stand up here to fight for heresy,
You are more than guess'd at as a heretic,
And on the steep-up track of the true faith
Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless Gardiner !

Mary. You brawl beyond the ques-
tion ; speak, Lord Legate !

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with
your Grace :

Rather would say—the shepherd doth
not kill

The sheep that wander from his flock, but
sends

His careful dog to bring them to the fold.
Look to the Netherlands, wherein have
been

Such holocausts of heresy ! to what end ?
For yet the faith is not established there.

Gardiner. The end's not come.

Pole. No—nor this way
will come,

Seeing there lie two ways to every end,
A better and a worse—the worse is here
To persecute, because to persecute
Makes a faith hated, and is furthermore
No perfect witness of a perfect faith
In him who persecutes : when men are tost
On tides of strange opinion, and not sure

Of their own selves, they are wroth with
their own selves,

And thence with others ; then, who lights
the faggot ?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking
doubt.

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in the
Church,

Trembled for her own gods, for these
were trembling—

But when did our Rome tremble ?

Paget. Did she not
In Henry's time and Edward's ?

Pole. What, my Lord !
The Church on Peter's rock ? never ! I
have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow
Ashwart a cataract ; firm stood the pine—

The cataract shook the shadow. To my
mind,

The cataract typed the headlong plunge
and fall

Of heresy to the pit : the pine was Rome.
You see, my Lords,

It was the shadow of the Church that
trembled ;

Your church was but the shadow of a
church,

Wanting the Papal mitre.

Gardiner (muttering). Here be tropes.

Pole. And tropes are good to clothe a
naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

Gardiner. Tropes again !

Pole. You are hard to please. Then
without tropes, my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat,
When faith in wavering makes the waverer

pass

Into more settled hatred of the doctrines
Of those who rule, which hatred by-and-by

Involves the ruler (thus there springs to
light

That Contout of a heretic) Commen-
weal,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some may
quail,

Yet others are that dare they undertake firm
And their strong torment bravely borne,

beggers
An admiration and an indignation,

And hot desire to imitate ; so the plague
Of schism spreads ; were there but three

or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not say
Burn ! and we cannot burn whole towns ;

they are many,

As my Lord Paget says.

Gardiner. Yet my Lord Cardinal—

Pole. I am your Legate ; please you
let me finish.

Methinks that under our Queen's regimen
We might go softlier than with crimson

rowel

And streaming lash. When Herod
Henry first

Began to batter at your English Church,

This was the cause, and hence the judg-
ment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and the
lives

Of many among your churchmen were
foul

That heaven wept and earth blushed. I
would advise

That we should thoughtfully cleanse the
Church within

Before these bitter statutes be requicken'd.

So after that when she once more is seen
White as the light, the spotless bride of

Christ,

I (the Christ himself) am Tutor, possibly
The Lutheran may be won to her again ;

Till whom, my Lord, I counsel silence.

Gardiner. What, if a mad dog be
your hand, my Lord,

Would you not chop the bitten finger off,
 Lest your whole body should madden
 with the poison?
 I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the
 heretic,
 No, not an hour. The ruler of a land
 Is bounden by his power and place to see
 His people be not poison'd. Tolerate
 them!
 Why? do they tolerate you? Nay, many
 of them
 Would burn—have burnt each other;
 call they not
 The one true faith, a loathsome idol-
 worship?
 Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier crime
 Than heresy is itself; beware, I say,
 Lest men accuse you of indifference
 To all faiths, all religion; for you know
 Right well that you yourself have been
 supposed
 Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.
Pole (angered). But you, my Lord,
 beyond all supposition,
 In clear and open day were congruent
 With that vile Cranmer in the accursed lie
 Of good Queen Catherine's divorce—the
 spring
 Of all those evils that have flow'd upon
 us;
 For you yourself have truckled to the
 tyrant,
 And done your best to bastardise our
 Queen,
 For which God's righteous judgment fell
 upon you
 In your five years of imprisonment, my
 Lord,
 Under young Edward. Who so bolster'd
 up
 The gross King's headship of the Church,
 or more
 Denied the Holy Father!

Gardiner. Ha! what! eh?
 But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentleman,
 A bookman, flying from the heat and
 tussle,
 You lived among your vines and oranges,
 In your soft Italy yonder! You were
 sent for,
 You were appeal'd to, but you still
 preferr'd
 Your learned leisure. As for what I did
 I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord
 Legate
 And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now to
 learn
 That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear
 Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my
 Lord.
Pole. But not for five-and-twenty
 years, my Lord.
Gardiner. Ha! good! it seems then
 I was summon'd hither
 But to, be mock'd and baited. Speak,
 friend Bonner,
 And tell this learned Legate he lacks zeal.
 The Church's evil is not as the King's,
 Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The mad
 bite
 Must have the cautery—tell him—and at
 once.
 What would'st thou do had'st thou his
 power, thou
 That layest so long in heretic bonds with
 me;
 Would'st thou not burn and blast them
 root and branch?
Bonner. Ay, after you, my Lord.
Gardiner. Nay, God's passion, before
 me! speak!
Bonner. I am on fire until I see them
 flame.
Gardiner. Ay, the psalm-singing
 weavers, cobblers, scum—
 But this most noble prince Plantagenet,

Our good Queen's cousin—dallying—
sits

Even when his brother's, nay, his noble
mother's,

Head fell—

Pole. Peace, madman!

Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not
fathom.

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord
Chancellor

Of England! no more rein upon thine
anger

I can any child! Thou mak'st me much
ashamed

That I was for a moment wroth at thee.

Mary. I come for counsel and ye give
me feuds,

Like dogs that set to watch their master's
gate,

Fill, when the thief is ev'n within the
walls

With worrying one another. My Lord
Chancellor,

You have an old trick of offending us;
And but that you are art and part with us

In purging heresy, well we might, for this
Your violence and much roughness to the

Legate,

Have shut you from our counsels.

Cousin Pole,

You are fresh from brighter lands.

Retire with me.

His Highness and myself (so you allow us)

Will let you learn in peace and privacy

What power this cooler sun of England
hath

In breeding godless vermin. And pray
Heaven

That you may see according to our sight.
Come, cousin.

Exeunt Queen and Pole, &c.

Gardiner. Pole has the Plantagenet
face,

But not the face made them our sightless
Jung.

His eyes—but not so holy, unclouded—
A true heart, Bonner, a very full true
heart.

But I speak naught, an indeterminate—
ha?

Quarrel. Well, I speak naught, pre-
chance.

Cardinal. And not like thine
To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or raw.

Bonner. I'd do my best, my Lord;
but yet the Legate

Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,
And if he go not with you—

Gardiner. Tut, Master Bishop,
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he
flush'd?

Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
He'll burn in diabolical proof his ortho-
doxy.

And let him call me traitor. In these
times,

Thou knowest we had to *judge, or die,*
or die;

I kept my head for me of Holy Church:
And see you, we shall have to *judge*
again,

And let the Pope trample our rights, and
plunge

His *design* for into our island Church.

To plunge the leamer parish of Italy,

For a time, for a time.

Why? that these statutes may be put in
force.

And that his fan may thoroughly purg
his floor.

Bonner. So then you hold the Pope—

Cardinal. I hold the Pope!

What do I hold him? what do I hold the
Pope?

Come, come, the *second* *cardinal*—this
Cardinal's fault—

I have gulpt it down. I am wholly for
 the Pope,
 Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
 The Eternal Peter of the changeless chair,
 Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred king
 of kings,
 God upon earth! what more? what would
 you have?
 Hence, let's be gone.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Well that you be not gone,
 My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at
 first with you,
 Is now content to grant you full forgiveness,
 So that you crave full pardon of the Legate.
 I am sent to fetch you.

Gardiner. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!
 Did you hear 'em? were you by?

Usher. I cannot tell you,
 His bearing is so courtly-delicate;
 And yet methinks he falters: their two
 Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin him,
 So press on him the duty which as Legate
 He owes himself, and with such royal
 smiles—

Gardiner. Smiles that burn men.
 Bonner, it will be carried.
 He falters, ha? 'fore God, we change and
 change;
 Men now are bow'd and old, the doctors
 tell you,
 At three-score years; then if we change
 at all
 We needs must do it quickly; it is an age
 Of brief life, and brief purpose, and brief
 patience,
 As I have shown to-day. I am sorry for it
 If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend
 Cranmer,
 Your more especial love, hath turn'd so
 often,

He knows not where he stands, which, if
 this pass,
 We two shall have to teach him; let 'em
 look to it,
 Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer,
 Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is come,
 Their hour is hard at hand, their 'dies
 Irae,'
 Their 'dies Illa,' which will test their sect.
 I feel it but a duty—you will find in it
 Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bonner,—
 To test their sect. Sir, I attend the Queen
 To crave most humble pardon—of her
 most
 Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

Lady. The colours of our Queen are
 green and white,
 These fields are only green, they make
 me gape.

Elizabeth. There's whitethorn, girl.

Lady. Ay, for an hour in May.
 But court is always May, buds out in
 masques,
 Breaks into feather'd merriments, and
 flowers
 In silken pageants. Why do they keep
 us here?

Why still suspect your Grace?

Elizabeth. Hard upon both.

[*Writes on the window with a diamond.*]

Much suspected, of me

Nothing proven can be.

Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

Lady. What hath your Highness
 written?

Elizabeth. A true rhyme.

Lady. Cut with a diamond; so to last
 like truth.

Elizabeth. Ay, if truth last.

Lady. But truth, they say, will out,
So it must last. It is not like a word,
That comes and goes in uttering.

Elizabeth. Truth, a word!
The very Truth and very Word are one.
But truth of story, which I glanced at, girl,
Is like a word that comes from olden days,
And passes thro' the peoples: every tongue
Alters it passing, till it spells and speaks
Quite other than at first.

Lady. I do not follow.

Elizabeth. How many names in the
long sweep of time
That so foreshortens greatness, may but hang
On the chance mention of some fool that
once
Brake bread with us, perhaps: and my
poor chronicle
Is but of glass. Sir Henry Bedingfield
May split it for a spite.

Lady. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's innocence,
Till doomsday melt it.

Elizabeth. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled underfoot
And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,
And char us back again into the dust
We spring from. Never peacock against
rain
Scream'd as you did for water.

Lady. And I got it.
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to you—
I read his honest horror in his eyes.

Elizabeth. Or true to you?

Lady. Sir Henry Bedingfield!
I will have no man true to me, your Grace,
But one that pares his nails; to me? the
clown!
For, like his cloak, his manners want the
nap
And gloss of court but of this fire he says,

Nay swears, it was no wicked wilfulness,
Only a natural chance.

Elizabeth. A chance—perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men
make,
Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I know
They hunt my blood. Save for my daily
range
Among the pleasant fields of Holy Writ
I might despair. But there hath some
one come;
The house is all in movement. Hence,
and see. [Exit Lady.]

Milkmaid (singing without).

Shame upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!
Kiss me would you? with my hand—
Milking the cow?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,
Kiss'd me well I vow.
Cuff him could I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now
Help it out I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Kingdoves coo again,
All things come again—
Come behind me I? with my hands
Milking the cow!

Elizabeth. Right honest and red-
check'd; Robin was violent,
And she was crafty—a sweet violence,
And a sweet craft. I would I were a
milkmaid,
To sing, love, marry, churn, brew, bake,
and die,
Then have my simple headstone by the
church,
And all things lived and ended honestly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's
daughter :

Gardiner would have my head. They are
not sweet,

The violence and the craft that do divide
The world of nature ; what is weak must
lie ;

The lion needs but roar to guard his young ;
The lapwing lies, says ' here ' when they
are there.

Threaten the child ; ' I'll scourge you if
you did it.'

What weapon hath the child, save his
soft tongue,

To say ' I did not ? ' and † my rod's the
block.

I never lay my head upon the pillow
But that I think, ' Wilt thou lie there to-
morrow ?'

How oft the falling axe, that never fell,
Hath shock'd me back into the daylight
truth

That it may fall to-day ! Those damp,
black, dead

Nights in the Tower ; dead—with the
fear of death

Too dead ev'n for a death-watch ! Toll
of a bell,

Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a rat
Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
For there was life—And there was life in
death—

The little murder'd princes, in a pale
light,

Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd, ' come
away !

The civil wars are gone for evermore :
Thou last of all the Tudors, come away !
With us is peace !' The last ? It was a
dream ;

I must not dream, not wink, but watch.
She has gone,

Maid Marian to her Robin—by-and-by

Both happy ! a fox may filch a hen by night,
And make a morning outcry in the yard ;
But there's no Renard here to ' catch her
tripping.'

Catch me who can ; yet, sometime I have
wish'd

That I were caught, and kill'd away at
once

Out of the flutter. The gray rogue,
Gardiner,

Went on his knees, and pray'd me to
confess

In Wyatt's business, and to cast myself
Upon the good Queen's mercy ; ay, when,
my Lord ?

God save the Queen ! My jailor—

Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

Bedingfield. One, whose bolts,
That jail you from free life, bar you from
death.

There haunt some Papist ruffians here—
about

Would murder you.

Elizabeth. I thank you heartily, sir,
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,
And God hath blest or cursed me with a
nose—

Your boots are from the horses.

Bedingfield. Ay, my Lady.
When next there comes a missive from
the Queen

It shall be all my study for one hour
To rose and lavender my horsiness,
Before I dare to glance upon your Grace.

Elizabeth. A missive from the Queen :
last time she wrote,

I had like to have lost my life : it takes
my breath :

O God, sir, do you look upon your boots,
Are you so small a man ? Help me
what think you,

Is it life or death ?

Elizabeth. I thought not on my boots ;

The devil take all boots were ever made
Since man went barefoot. See, I lay it
here,

For I will come no nearer to your Grace ;
[*Laying down the letter.*]

And, whether it bring you bitter news or
sweet,

And God hath given your Grace a nose,
or not,

I'll help you, if I may.

Elizabeth. Your pardon, then ;
It is the heat and narrowness of the cage
That makes the captive testy ; with free
wing

The world were all one Araby. Leave
me now,

Will you, companion to myself, sir ?

Elizabeth. Will I ?
With most exceeding willingness, I will ;
You know I never come till I be call'd.

[*Exit.*]

Elizabeth. It lies there folded : is there
venom in it ?

A snake—and if I touch it, it may sting.
Come, come, the worst !

Best wisdom is to know the worst at once.
[*Exit.*]

'It is the King's wish, that you
should wed Prince Phillibert of Savoy.
You are to come to Court on the instant ;
and think of this in your coming.

‘MARY THE QUEEN.’

Think ! I have many thoughts ;
I think there may be birdlime here for me ;
I think they fain would have me from the
realm ;

I think the Queen may never bear a
child ;

I think that I may be some time the
Queen,

Then, (James indeed) no foreign prince
or priest

Should fill my throne, myself upon the
steps.

I think I will not marry anyone,
Specially not this lustless Phillibert
Of Savoy ; nor, if Phillip name me,
I think that I will play with Phillibert,—
As once the Holy Father did with mine,
Before my father married my good
mother,—

For fear of Spain.

Enter LADY.

Lady. O Lord ! your Grace, your
Grace,

I feel so happy : it seems that we shall
fly

These bald, blank fields, and dance into
the sun

That shines on princes.

Elizabeth. Yet, a moment since,
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing
here,

To kiss and cuff among the birds and
flowers—

A right rough life and healthful.

Lady. But the wench
Hath her own troubles ; she is weeping
now :

For the wrong Robin took her at her
word.

Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk
was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid ?

Elizabeth. I had kept
My Robins and my cream the sweeter
under

Had I been such.

Lady (silly). And had your Grace a
Robin ?

Elizabeth. Come, come, you are chill
here ; you want the sun

That shines at court ; make ready for the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.
Ready at once. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

LORD PETRE *and* LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Petre. You cannot see the Queen.
Renard denied her,

Ev'n now to me.

Howard. Their Flemish go-between
And all-in-all. I came to thank her Majesty
For freeing my friend Bagenhall from the Tower ;

A grace to me ! Mercy, that herb-of-grace,
Flowers now but seldom.

Petre. Only now perhaps.
Because the Queen hath been three days
in tears

For Philip's going—like the wild hedge-rose

Of a soft winter, possible, not probable,
However you have prov'n it.

Howard. I must see her.

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My Lords, you cannot see her Majesty.

Howard. Why then the King ! for I would have him bring it
Home to the leisure wisdom of his Queen,
Before he go, that since these statutes past,
Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in his heat,
Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self—
Beast !—but they play with fire as children do,
And burn the house. I know that these
are breeding

A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in men
Against the King, the Queen, the Holy
Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him ?

Renard. Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire from
her,

Not hope to melt her. I will give your
message.

[Exeunt *Petre and Howard.*

Enter PHILIP (*musings*).

Philip. She will not have Prince
Philibert of Savoy,

I talk'd with her in vain—says she will
live

And die true maid—a goodly creature too.
Would *she* had been the Queen ! yet she
must have him ;

She troubles England : that she breathes
in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth
That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard !—

This Howard, whom they fear, what was
he saying ?

Renard. What your imperial father
said, my liege,

To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner
burns,

And Bonner burns ; and it would seem
this people

Care more for our brief life in their wet
land,

Than yours in happier Spain. I told my
Lord

He should not vex her Highness ; she
would say

These are the means God works with,
that His church

May flourish.

Philip. Ay, sir, but in statesmanship

To strike too soon is oft to miss the blow.
 Thou knowest I had my chaplain Castro
 preach

Against these burnings.

Remond. And the Emperor
 Approved you, and when last he wrote
 declared

His comfort in your Grace that you were
 heard

And affable to men of all estates.

In hope to charm them from their hate of
 Spain.

Philip. In hope to crush all heresy
 under Spain.

Remond. I am sicker staying here
 Than any sea could make me passing hence,
 That I be ever deadly sick at sea.

so sick am I with biding for this child.
 O! 't the fashion in this clime for women
 To go twelve months in bearing of a
 child?

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped,
 they left

Prayers, chanted litanies, clash'd their
 bells,

shot off their lying cannon, and her
 priests

Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair
 prince to come.

Till, by St. James, I find myself the fool.
 Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus?

Remond. I never saw your Highness
 moved till now.

Philip. So weary am I of this wet
 land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes
 therein.

Remond. My liege, we must not drop
 the mask before

The masquerade is over—

Philip. —Have I dropt it?
 I have but shown a loathing face to you,
 Who knew it from the first.

ELIZABETH.

Mary. *Good!* With Remond, still
 Employing with Remond, all the day will
 Remond,

And wastes a morning all the day for me—
 And goes to-morrow. [*Exit Mary.*

Philip. *O!* Remond, why dost thou
 thus? Will, say, is there more?

Remond. *He has prevailed the Queen.*
 May Simon Remond speak a single
 word?

Philip. Ay.

Remond. And be forgiven for it?

Philip. Simon Remond
 Knows me too well to speak a single word
 That could not be forgiven.

Remond. Well, my liege,
 Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving
 wife.

Philip. Why not? The Queen of
 Philip should be chaste.

Remond. Ay, but, my Lord, you
 know what Virgil sings,

Woman is virtuous and most faithful—

Philip. She play the harlot? never.

Remond. No, say, do
 Not demand of by the rabulist gospellers,
 There was a paper thrown into the palace,
 'The King hath wearied of his barren
 bride.'

She ransacked it, read it, and then said,
 With all the rage of one who loves a
 truth

He cannot say allow. Sirs, I would
 have you—

What should I say, I cannot pick my
 words—

be somewhat less—sensitive to your
 opinion.

Philip. Am I to change my manners,
 Simon Remond,

because these libellous are (brand beasts)?
 Or would you have me turn a sonneteer.

And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?

Renard. Brief-sighted tho' they be,
I have seen them, sire,

When you perchance were trifling royally
With some fair dame of court, suddenly
fill

With such fierce fire—had it been fire
indeed

It would have burnt both speakers.

Philip. Ay, and then?

Renard. Sire, might it not be policy
in some matter

Of small importance now and then to
cede

A point to her demand?

Philip. Well, I am going.

Renard. For should her love when
you are gone, my liege,

Witness these papers, there will not be
wanting

Those that will urge her injury—should
her love—

And I have known such women more
than one—

Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy
Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse
Almost into one metal love and hate,—
And she impress her wrongs upon her
Council,

And these again upon her Parliament—
We are not loved here, and would be
then perhaps

Not so well holpen in our wars with
France,

As else we might be—here she comes.

Enter MARY.

Mary. O Philip!

Nay, must you go indeed?

Philip. Madam, I must.

Mary. The parting of a husband and
a wife

Is like the cleaving of a heart; one half
Will flutter here, one there.

Philip. You say true, Madam.

Mary. The Holy Virgin will not have
me yet

Lose the sweet hope that I may bear a
prince.

If such a prince were born and you not
here!

Philip. I should be here if such a
prince were born.

Mary. But must you go?

Philip. Madam, you know my father,
Retiring into cloistral solitude
To yield the remnant of his years to
heaven,

Will shift the yoke and weight of all the
world

From off his neck to mine. We meet at
Brussels.

But since mine absence will not be for long,
Your Majesty shall go to Dover with me,
And wait my coming back.

Mary. To Dover? no,
I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich,
So you will have me with you; and there
watch

All that is gracious in the breath of heaven
Draw with your sails from our poor land,
and pass

And leave me, Philip, with my prayers
for you.

Philip. And doubtless I shall profit
by your prayers.

Mary. Methinks that would you tarry
one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould
myself

To bear your going better; will you do it?

Philip. Madam, a day may sink or
save a realm.

Mary. A day may save a heart from
breaking too.

Philip. Well, Simon Renard, shall we stop a day?

Renard. Your Grace's business will not suffer, sire,

For one day more, so far as I can tell.

Philip. Then one day more to please her Majesty.

Mary. The sunshine sweeps across my life again.

O if I knew you felt this parting, Philip, As I do!

Philip. By St. James I do protest, Upon the faith and honour of a Spaniard, I am vastly griev'd to leave your Majesty, supper is supper ready?

Renard. Ay, my liege, I saw the covers laying.

Philip. Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

Mary. What have you there?

Pole. So please your Majesty, A long petition from the foreign exiles To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop Thirlby, And my Lord Paget and Lord William Howard, Crave, in the same cause, hearing of your Grace,

Hath he not written himself—infatuated— To save you for his life?

Mary. His life? Oh, no; Not sued for that—he knows it were in vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me not to sully Mine own prerogative, and degrade the realm

By seeking justice at a stranger's hand Against my natural subject. King and Queen,

To whom he owes his loyalty after God, Shall these accuse him to a foreign prince? Death would not grieve him more, I warrant he.

Tro to this scale of England and the Pope

Together, says the heretic.

Pole. And there errs; As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.

A secular kingdom is but as the body Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast, The Holy Father in a secular kingdom Is as the soul descending out of heaven Into a body generate.

Mary. Write to him, then.

Pole. I will.

Mary. And sharply, Pole.

Pole. Here come the Cranmerites!

Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Health to your Grace! Good morrow, my Lord Cardinal; We make our humble prayer into your Grace

That Cranmer may withdraw to his apartments,

Of into private life within the realm, In several bills and declarations, Madam, He hath recanted all his heresies.

Paget. Ay, ay; if Bonner have not forgot the bills. [*Exeunt.*]

Mary. Did not More, Day, and Fisher? he must burn.

Mary. He hath recanted, Madam. *Mary.* The better let him. He burns in Tormentary, not in Hell.

Howard. Ay, ay, your Grace; but it was never seen.

That any one recanted thus at all!

As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.

Mary. It will be seen now, then.

Thirby. O Madam, Madam !

I thus implore you, low upon my knees,
To reach the hand of mercy to my friend.
I have err'd with him ; with him I have recanted.

What human reason is there why my friend

Should meet with lesser mercy than myself ?

Mary. My Lord of Ely, this. After a riot

We hang the leaders, let their following go.

Cranmer is head and father of these heresies,

New learning as they call it ; yea, may God

Forget me at most need when I forget
Her foul divorce—my sainted mother—
No !—

Howard. Ay, ay, but mighty doctors doubted there.

The Pope himself waver'd ; and more than one

Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to wit,
Whom truly I deny not to have been
Your faithful friend and trusty councillor.
Hath not your Highness ever read his book,

His tractate upon True Obedience,
Writ by himself and Bonner ?

Mary. I will take

Such order with all bad, heretical books
That none shall hold them in his house
and live,

Henceforward. No, my Lord.

Howard. Then never read it.

The truth is here. Your father was a man
Of such colossal kinghood, yet so courteous,

Except when wroth, you scarce could meet his eye

And hold your own ; and were he wroth indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say,
Your father had a will that beat men down ;

Your father had a brain that beat men down—

Pole. Not me, my Lord.

Howard. No, for you were not here ;
You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's throne ;
And it would more become you, my Lord Legate,

To join a voice, so potent with her Highness,

To ours in plea for Cranmer than to stand
On naked self-assertion.

Mary. All your voices
Are waves on flint. The heretic must burn.

Howard. Yet once he saved your Majesty's own life ;
Stood out against the King in your behalf,
At his own peril.

Mary. I know not if he did ;
And if he did I care not, my Lord Howard.
My life is not so happy, no such boon,
That I should spare to take a heretic priest's,
Who saved it or not sav'd. Why do you vex me ?

Paget. Yet to save Cranmer were to serve the Church,

Your Majesty's I mean ; he is effaced,
Self-blotted out ; so wounded in his honour,

He can but creep down into some dark hole

Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and die ;

But if you burn him,—well, your Highness knows

The saying, 'Martyr's Blood—seed of the Church.'

Mary. Of the true Church; but his is none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord Paget. And if he have to live so loath'd a life, It were more merciful to burn him now.

Thirdly. O yet relent. O, Madam, if you knew him—

As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious, With all his learning—

Mary. Yet a heretic still.

His learning makes his burning the more just.

Thirdly. So worshipt of all those that came across him;

The stranger at his hearth, and all his house—

Mary. His children and his concubine, belike.

Thirdly. To do him any wrong was to beget

A kindness from him, for his heart was rich,

Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd therein

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Charity.

Thirdly. 'After his kind it costs him nothing,' there's

An old world English adage to the point.

These are but natural graces, my good Bishop,

Which in the Catholic garden are as flowers,

But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.

Howard. Such weeds make dunghills gracious.

Mary. Enough, my Lords.

It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,

And Philip's will, and mine, that he should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

Howard. Farewell, Madam,

God grant you troubles none yf at your will Than you have shown to Cranmer.

[*Exeunt Lords.*]

Pole. After this,

Your Grace will hardly see to overlook This same petition of the foreign exiles For Cranmer's life.

Mary. Make out the writ forthwith. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—OXFORD. CRANMER IN PRISON.

Cranmer. Last night, I dream'd the faggots were alight,

And that myself was fasten'd to the stake,

And found it all a visionary flame,

Cool as the light in old decaying wood;

And then King Harry look'd from out a cloud,

And bad me have good courage; and I heard

An angel cry 'There is more joy in Heaven,—'

And after that, the trumpet of the dead.

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

Why, there are trumpets blowing now: what is it?

[*Enter FATHER COLE.*]

Cole. Cranmer, I come to question you again;

Have you remain'd in the true Catholic faith

I left you in?

Cranmer. In the true Catholic faith, By Heaven's grace, I was never and more confirm'd.

Why are the trumpets blowing, Father Cole?

Cole. Cranmer, it is decided by the Council

That you to-day should read your recantation

Before the people in St. Mary's Church.
 And there be many heretics in the town,
 Who loathe you for your late return to
 Rome,
 And might assail you passing through the
 street,
 And tear you piecemeal: so you have a
 guard.

Cranmer. Or seek to rescue me. I
 thank the Council.

Cole. Do you lack any money?

Cranmer. Nay, why should I?
 The prison fare is good enough for me.

Cole. Ay, but to give the poor.

Cranmer. Hand it me, then!
 I thank you.

Cole. For a little space, farewell;
 Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.

[*Exit Cole.*]

Cranmer. It is against all precedent
 to burn
 One who recants; they mean to pardon
 me.

To give the poor—they give the poor who
 die.

Well, burn me or not burn me I am
 fixt;

It is but a communion, not a mass:
 A holy supper, not a sacrifice;
 No man can make his Maker—Villa
 Garcia.

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. Pray you write out this
 paper for me, Cranmer.

Cranmer. Have I not writ enough to
 satisfy you?

Villa Garcia. It is the last.

Cranmer. Give it me, then.

[*He writes.*]

Villa Garcia. Now sign.

Cranmer. I have sign'd enough, and
 I will sign no more.

Villa Garcia. It is no more than what
 you have sign'd already,
 The public form thereof.

Cranmer. It may be so;
 I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

Villa Garcia. But this is idle of you.
 Well, sir, well,

You are to beg the people to pray for you;
 Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life;
 Declare the Queen's right to the throne;
 confess

Your faith before all hearers; and retract
 That Eucharistic doctrine in your book.

Will you not sign it now?

Cranmer. No, Villa Garcia,
 I sign no more. Will they have mercy
 on me?

Villa Garcia. Have you good hopes
 of mercy! So, farewell. [*Exit.*]

Cranmer. Good hopes, not theirs,
 have I that I am fixt,
 Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange
 hours,

After the long brain-dazing colloquies,
 And thousand-times recurring argument
 Of those two friars ever in my prison,
 When left alone in my despondency,
 Without a friend, a book, my faith would
 seem

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam
 heavily

Against the huge corruptions of the
 Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough
 To scare me into dreaming, 'what am I,
 Cranmer, against whole ages?' was it so,
 Oram I slandering my most inward friend,
 To veil the fault of my most outward foe—
 The soft and tremulous coward in the
 flesh?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,
 I have found thee and not leave thee any
 more.

It is but a communion, not a mass—

No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!

(*Prayer.*) So, so; this will I say—thus
will I pray. [*Throws up the paper.*]

Enter BONNER.

Lantern. Good day, old friend; what
you look somewhat worn;

And yet it is a day to test your health
Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken
with you

Since when?—your degradation. At
your trial

Never stood up a bolder man than you;
You would not cap the Pope's commis-
sioner—

Your learning, and your stoutness, and
your heresy,

Foundered half of us. So, after that,
We had to dis-archbishop and unlord,
And make you simple Cranmer once
again.

The common barber clipped your hair, and I
sucked from your finger-points the holy
oil;

And worse than all, you had to kneel to
me;

Which was not pleasant for you, Master
Cranmer.

Now you, that would not recognise the
Pope,

And you, that would not own the Real
Presence,

Have found a real presence in the stake,
Which frights you back into the ancient
faith;

And so you have recanted to the Pope.

How are the mighty fallen, Master
Cranmer!

Cranmer. You have been more fierce
against the Pope than I;

But why fling back the stone he strikes me
with? [*Aside.*]

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—
Power hath been given you to try truth by
fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself have
changed,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have gone.
To the poor soul—the woman and the
children—

That when I was archbishop held with me.

Bonner. Ay—gentle as they call you—
—live or die!

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?

I must obey the Queen and Council, man.
Win thro' this day with honour to your-
self,

And I'll say something for you—
good-bye. [*Exit.*]

Cranmer. This hard coarse man of old
hath crouch'd to me

Till I myself was half ashamed for him.

Enter THIRLBY.

Weep not, good Thirby.

Thirby. Oh, my lord, my lord!
My heart is no such flesh as Bonner's is;
Who would not weep?

Cranmer. Why do you so my-lord me,
Who am disgrac'd!

Thirby. Ourselves; but needs to
bowe
By your recanting.

Cranmer. Will they burn me,
Thirby?

Thirby. Ah, they will; those burn-
ings will not help

The purpose of the faith; but my poor
soul

Agains them is a whisper to the ear
Of a spring-tide.

Cranmer. And they will surely
burn me?

Thirby. Ay; and besides, will have
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears
Of all men, to the saving of their souls,
Before your execution. May God help
you

Thro' that hard hour!

Cranmer. And may God bless you,
Thirlby!

Well, they shall hear my recantation there.

[*Exit* Thirlby.]

Disgraced, dishonour'd!—not by them,
indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand!

O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,
'twas you

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan of
Kent;

But then she was a witch. You have
written much,

But you were never raised to plead for
Frith,

Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was
deliver'd

To the secular arm to burn; and there
was Lambert;

Who can foresee himself? truly these
burnings,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the
burners,

And help the other side. You shall burn
too,

Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire -inch by inch to die in agony!
Latimer,

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper
burn'd

Three-quarters of an hour. Will my
faggots

Be wet as his were? It is a day of
rain.

I will not muse upon it.

My fancy takes the burner's part, and
makes

The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me
strength,

Albeit I have denied him.

Enter SOTO and VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. We are ready
To take you to St. Mary's, Master
Cranmer.

Cranmer. And I: lead on; ye loose
me from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

COLE *in the Pulpit*, LORD WILLIAMS
OF THAME *presiding*. LORD WILLIAM
HOWARD, LORD PAGET, and others.
CRANMER *enters between* SOTO and
VILLA GARCIA, and the whole Choir
strike up 'Nunc Dimittis.' CRANMER
is set upon a Scaffold before the people.

Cole. Behold him—

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*]

People. Oh, unhappy sight!

First Protestant. See how the tears
run down his fatherly face.

Second Protestant. James, didst thou
ever see a carrion crow

Stand watching a sick beast before he
dies?

First Protestant. Him perch'd up
there? I wish some thunderbolt
Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit
and all.

Cole. Behold him, brethren: he hath
cause to weep!—

So have we all: weep with him if ye will,
Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,
Yea, for the people, lest the people die.
Yet wherefore should he die that hath
return'd

To the one Catholic Universal Church,
Repentant of his errors?

Protestant murmurs. Ay, tell us that.

Cole. Those of the wrong side will despise the man,

Deeming him one that thro' the fear of death

Gave up his cause, except he seal his faith
In sight of all with flaming martyrdom.

Cranmer. Ay.

Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there may seem

According to the canons pardon due
To him that so repents, yet are there causes

Wherefore our Queen and Council at this time

Adjudge him to the death. He hath been a traitor,

A shaker and confounder of the realm ;
And when the King's divorce was sued at Rome,

He here, this heretic metropolitan,
As if he had been the Holy Father, sat
And judged it. Did I call him heretic?
A huge heresiarch ! never was it known
That any man so writing, preaching so,
So poisoning the Church, so long continuing,

Hath found his pardon ; therefore he must die,

For warning and example.

Other reasons

There be for this man's ending, which our Queen

And Council at this present deem it not expedient to be known.

Protestant murmurs. I warrant you.

Cole. Take therefore, all, example by this man,

For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,
Much less shall others in like cause escape,

That all of you, the highest as the lowest,

May learn there is no power against the Lord.

There stands a man, once of so high degree,

Chief pastor of our Church, archbishop, first

In Council, second person in the realm,
Friend for a long time of a mighty king ;

And now ye see downfallen and dejected
From councillor to caitiff—fallen so low,

The leprous flutterings of the byway, seem

And offal of the city would not change Estates with him ; in brief, so miserable,
There is no hope of better left for him,
No place for worse.

Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad.

This is the work of God. He is glorified
In thy conversion : lo ! thou art reclaim'd ;
He brings thee home : nor fear but that to-day

Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's award,

And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.
Remember how God made the fierce fire seem

To those three children like a pleasant dew.

Remember, too,

The triumph of St. Andrew in his cross,
The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.
Thus, if thou call on God and all the saints,

God will ease down the fury of the flames,
Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.
And for thy soul shall receive here or long
By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.

Cranmer. Ay, and all, and all
Brethren, pray for me :

I pray with one breath, one heart, one soul for me.

Cole. And now, let anyone among you think

The man's conversion and remorse of heart,

Yourselves shall hear him speak. Speak, Master Cranmer,

Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim

Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

Cranmer. And that I will. O God, Father of Heaven!

O Son of God, Redeemer of the world!

O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them both,

Three persons and one God, have mercy on me,

Most miserable sinner, wretched man.

I have offended against heaven and earth

More grievously than any tongue can tell.

Then whither should I flee for any help?

I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,

And I can find no refuge upon earth.

Shall I despair then?—God forbid! O God,

For thou art merciful, refusing none

That come to Thee for succour, unto Thee,

Therefore, I come; humble myself to Thee;

Saying, O Lord God, although my sins be great,

For thy great mercy have mercy! O God the Son,

Not for slight faults alone, when thou becamest

Man in the Flesh, was the great mystery wrought;

O God the Father, not for little sins

Didst thou yield up thy Son to human death;

But for the greatest sin that can be sinn'd,

Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,

Unpardonable,—sin against the light,

The truth of God, which I had proven and known.

Thy mercy must be greater than all sin.

Forgive me, Father, for no merit of mine,

But that Thy name by man be glorified.

And Thy most blessed Son's, who died for man.

Good people, every man at time of death

Would fain set forth some saying that may live

After his death and better humankind;

For death gives life's last word a power to live,

And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain

After the vanish'd voice, and speak to men.

God grant me grace to glorify my God!

And first I say it is a grievous case,

Many so dote upon this bubble world,

Whose colours in a moment break and fly,

They care for nothing else. What saith

St. John:—

'Love of this world is hatred against God.'

Again, I pray you all that, next to God,

You do unmurmuringly and willingly

Obey your King and Queen, and not for dread

Of these alone, but from the fear of Him

Whose ministers they be to govern you.

Thirdly, I pray you all to live together

Like brethren; yet what hatred Christian men

Bear to each other, seeming not as brethren,

But mortal foes! But do you good to all

As much as in you lieth. Hurt no man more

Than you would harm your loving natural brother

Of the same roof, same breast. If any do,

Albeit he think himself at home with God,

Of this be sure, he is whole worlds away.

Protestant murmurs. What sort of
brothers then be those that lust
To burn each other ?

Williams. Peace among you, there !

Cranmer. Foughtly, to those that own
exceeding wealth,

Remember that sore saying spoken once
By Him that was the truth, 'How hard
it is

For the rich man to enter into Heaven ;'
Let all rich men remember that hard word.
I have not time for more : if ever, now
let them flow forth in charity, seeing now
The poor so many, and all food so dear.

Long have I lain in prison, yet have heard
Of all their wretchedness. Give to the
poor,

Ye give to God. He is with us in the
poor.

And now, and forasmuch as I have
come

To the last end of life, and thereupon
Hangs all my past, and all my life to be,
Either to live with Christ in Heaven with
joy,

Or to be still in pain with devils in hell ;
And, seeing in a moment, I shall find

[Points upwards.]

Heaven or else hell ready to swallow me,
[Points downwards.]

I shall declare to you my very faith
Without all colour.

Cole. Hear him, my good brethren.

Cranmer. I do believe in God, Father
of all ;

In every article of the Catholic faith,
And every syllable taught us by our Lord,
His prophets, and apostles, in the Testa-
ments,

Both Old and New.

Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

Cranmer. And now I come to the
great cause that weighs

Upon my conscience more than anything
Of mild or done in all my life by me :

For there be writings I have set abroad
Against the truth I know within my heart,
Written for fear of death, to save my life.
If that might be ; the papers by my hand
Signed ~~to~~ *to* my degradation by (his hand

[Holds out his right hand.]

Written and signed—I here renounce them
all ;

And, since my hand offended, having
written

Against my heart, my hand shall first be
burnt,

So I may come to the fire.

[Dead silence.]

Protestant murmurs.

First Protestant. I knew it would be
so.

Second Protestant. Our prayers are
heard !

Third Protestant. God bless him !

Catholic murmurs. Out upon him !
out upon him !

Liar ! dissembler ! traitor ! to the fire !

Williams comes in with a book. You
know that you recanted all you
said

You love the sacrament in that same
book

You wrote against my Lord of Westmin-
ster ;

Dissemble not ; pity the plain Christian
man.

Cranmer. Alas, my Lord,

I have been a man bound prisoner all my
life ;

I *did* dissemble, but the hour has come
For utter truth and plainness ; wherefore,
I say,

I *did* by all I wend within that book.

Moreover,

As for the Pope I count him Antichrist,

With all his devil's doctrines ; and refuse,
Reject him, and abhor him. I have said.

[*Cries on all sides, 'Pull him down !
Away with him !'*

Col. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth !
Hale him away !

Williams. Harm him not, harm him
not ! have him to the fire !

[*CRANMER goes out between Two
Friars, smiling ; hands are
reached to him from the crowd.*

LORD WILLIAM HOWARD and
LORD PAGET are left alone in the
church.

Paget. The nave and aisles all empty
as a fool's jest !

No, here's Lord William Howard.
What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning ?

Howard. Fie !

To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,
And watch a good man burn. Never again.
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.
Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would not,
For the pure honour of our common
nature,

Hear what I might—another recantation
Of Cranmer at the stake.

Paget. You'd not hear that.

He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd
upright ;

His eye was like a soldier's, whom the
general

He looks to and he leans on as his God,
Hath rated for some backwardness and
bidd'n him

Charge one against a thousand, and the
man

Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes and
dies.

Howard. Yet that he might not after
all those papers

Of recantation yield again, who knows ?

Paget. Papers of recantation ! Think
you then

That Cranmer read all papers that he
sign'd ?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he
sign'd ?

Nay, I trow not : and you shall see, my
Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another
Will in some lying fashion misreport
His ending to the glory of their church.
And you saw Latimer and Ridley die ?
Latimer was eighty, was he not ? his best
Of life was over then.

Howard. His eighty years
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in his
frieze ;

But after they had stript him to his
shroud,

He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
And gather'd with his hands the starting
flame,

And wash'd his hands and all his face
therein,

Until the powder suddenly blew him
dead.

Ridley was longer burning ; but he died
As manfully and boldly, and, 'fore God,
I know them heretics, but right English
ones.

If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with
Spain,

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-
sailors

Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole
Will tell you that the devil helpt them
thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the
distance.*

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs howl
and bay him !

Howard. Might it not be the other
side rejoicing

In his brave end?

Paget. They are too crush'd, too
broken,

They can but weep in silence.

Howard. Ay, ay, Paget,

They have brought it in large measure on
themselves.

Have I not heard them mock the blessed
Host

In songs so lewd, the beast might roar
his claim

To being in God's image, more than
they?

Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the
groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the parson's
place,

The parson from his own spire swung out
dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets, and
all men

Regarding her? I say they have drawn
the fire

On their own heads: yet, Paget, I do
hold

The Catholic, if he have the greater right,
Hath been the crueller.

Paget. Action and re-action,

The miserable see-saw of our child-
world,

Make us despise it at odd hours, my
Lord.

Heaven help that this re-action not re-
act,

Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,
So that she come to rule us.

Howard. The world's mad.

Paget. My Lord, the world is like a
drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end—
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the left,
Push'd by the crowd beside—and under-
foot

An earthquake; for since Henry for a
doubt—

Which a young last had clapt upon the
back,

Crying, 'Forward!'—set our old church
rocking, men

Have hardly known what to believe, or
whether

They should believe in anything; the
currents

So shift and change, they see not how
they are borne,

Nor whither. I conclude the King a
beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world
A most obedient beast and fool—myself

Half beast and fool as appertaining to it;
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of
each

Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
As may be consonant with mortality.

Howard. We talk and Crasmer
suffers.

The kindest man I ever knew:—see,
see,

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy
land!

Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in
herself,

And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock of
Spain—

Her life, since Philip left her, and she
lost

Her fierce desire of bearing him a child,
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's day,

Gone narrowing down and darkening to a
close.

There will be more conspiracies, I fear.

Howard. Ay, ay, beware of France.

Howard. O Paget, Paget!

I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,
Expectant of the rack from day to day,
To whom the fire were welcome, lying
chain'd

In breathless dungeons over steaming
sewers,

Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon
the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,
Until they died of rotted limbs; and
then

Cast on the dunghill naked, and become
Hideously alive again from head to heel,
Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel
vomit

With hate and horror.

Paget. Nay, you sicken me

To hear you.

Howard. Fancy-sick; these things
are done,

Done right against the promise of this
Queen

Twice given.

Paget. No faith with heretics, my
Lord!

Hist! there be two old gossips—gospel-
lers,

I take it; stand behind the pillar here;
I warrant you they talk about the burning.

*Enter TWO OLD WOMEN. JOAN, and
after her TIB.*

Joan. Why, it be Tib!

Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the wind
and the wet! What a day, what a day!
nigh upo' judgement daay loike. Pwoaps
be pretty things, Joan, but they wunt set
i' the Lord's cheer o' that daay.

Joan. I must set down myself, Tib;
it be a var waay vor my owld legs up
vro' Islip. Eh, my rheumatizy be that
bad howiver be I to win to the burnin'.

Tib. I should saay'twur ower by now.
I'd ha' been here avore, but Dumble wur
blow'd wi' the wind, and Dumble's the
best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's butter's as good 'z
hern.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be better.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me,
Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man
wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree hard
eggs for a good peace at the burmin'; and
barrin' the wet, Hodge 'ud ha' been a-
harrowin' o' white peasen i' the outfield
—and barrin' the wind, Dumble wur
blow'd wi' the wind, so 'z we was forced
to stick her, but we fetched her round at
last. Thank the Lord therevore. Dum-
ble's the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps and
vires be bad things; tell 'ee now, I heerd
summat as summun towld summun o'
owld Bishop Gardiner's end; there wur
an owld lord a-cum to dine wi' un, and
a wur so owld a couldn't bide vor his
dinner, but a had to bide howsomiver,
vor 'I wunt dine,' says my Lord Bishop,
says he, 'not till I hears ez Latimer and
Ridley be a-vire;' and so they bided on
and on till vour o' the clock, till his man
cum in post vro' here, and tells un ez the
vire has tuk holt. 'Now,' says the
Bishop, says he, 'we'll gwo to dinner;'
and the owld lord fell to 's meat wi' a
will, God bless un! but Gardiner wur
struck down like by the hand o' God
avore a could taste a mossel, and a set un

all a-vine, so 's the tongue on 'em can be
 lapping out o' 'is mouth as black as a
 rye. Thank the Lord, therefore.

Agnes. The fools!

Tit. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary
 gives on a-burnin' and a-burnin', 's get
 her baaby born; but all her burnin's 'll
 never burn out the hypocrisy that makes
 the water in her. There's nought but
 the vire of God's hell ez can burn out
 that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therefore.

Peter. The fools!

Tit. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and
 a-makin' o' volk madder and madder;
 but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—and
 I bein't wrong not twice i' ten year—the
 burnin' o' the owld archbishop 'll burn
 the T'wosp out o' this 'ere land vor iver
 and iver.

Howard. Out of the church, you
 brace of cursed crones,
 Or I will have you duck'd! (*Women
 hurry out.*) Said I not right?
 For how should reverend prelate or
 throned prince
 Brook for an hour such brute malignity?
 Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther
 brew'd!

Agnes. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor
 garrulous country-wives.
 Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side
 with you;

You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.

Howard. I think that in some sort we
 may. But see,

Enter PETERS.

Peter, my gentleman, an honest
 Catholic,
 Who follow'd with the crowd to Cran-
 mer's fire.
 One that would neither misreport nor lie,

Not to give pardon; no, nor'd the Pope
 Charged him to do so,—he is white as
 death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring
 the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you.

Peters. 'Twas so, 'twas so—
 The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt
 me round.

Howard. Peter, you know me
 Catholic, but English.

Did he die bravely? Tell me that, or leave
 All else untold.

Peter. My Lord, he died most
 bravely.

Howard. Then tell me all.

Agnes. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

Peters. You saw him how he past
 among the crowd;
 And ever as he walk'd the Spanish friars—
 Still plied him with outrage and
 reproach:

But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the
 helm
 Steers, ever looking to the happy haven—
 Where he shall rest at night, moved to
 his death;

And I could see that many silent hands
 Came from the crowd and met his own;
 and thus,

When we had come where Ridley burn'd
 with Latimer,

He, with a cheerful smile, as one whose
 mind

Is all made up, in haste put off the robe—
 They had made 'd his sunny wild, and all
 is white,

His long white beard, which he had never
 shaven

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping to
 the chest,

Where with they bound him to the stake,
 he stood

More like an ancient father of the Church,
 Than heretic of these times ; and still
 the friars
 Plied him, but Cranmer only shook his
 head,
 Or answer'd them in smiling negatives ;
 Whereat Lord Williams gave a sudden
 cry :—
 ' Make short ! make short ! ' and so they
 lit the wood.
 Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to
 heaven,
 And thrust his right into the bitter flame ;
 And crying, in his deep voice, more than
 once,
 ' This hath offended—this unworthy
 hand ! '
 So held it till it all was burn'd, before
 The flame had reach'd his body ; I stood
 near—
 Mark'd him—he never uttered moan of
 pain :
 He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like a
 statue,
 Unmoving in the greatness of the flame,
 Gave up the ghost ; and so past martyr-
 like—
 Martyr I may not call him—past—but
 whither ?
Paget. To purgatory, man, to purga-
 tory.
Peters. Nay, but, my Lord, he denied
 purgatory.
Paget. Why then to heaven, and God
 ha' mercy on him.
Howard. Paget, despite his fearful
 heresies,
 I loved the man, and needs must moan
 for him ;
 O Cranmer !
Paget. But your moan is useless now :
 Come out, my Lord, it is a world of fools.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LONDON. HALL IN THE
 PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. Madam,
 I do assure you, that it must be look'd to :
 Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes
 Are scarce two hundred men, and the
 French fleet
 Rule in the narrow seas. It must be
 look'd to,
 If war should fall between yourself and
 France ;
 Or you will lose your Calais.
Mary. It shall be look'd to ;
 I wish you a good morning, good Sir
 Nicholas :
 Here is the King. [*Exit Heath.*]

Enter PHILIP.

Philip. Sir Nicholas tells you true,
 And you must look to Calais when I go.
Mary. Go ! must you go, indeed—
 again—so soon ?
 Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the
 swallow,
 That might live always in the sun's warm
 heart,
 Stays longer here in our poor north than
 you :—
 Knows where he nested—ever comes
 again.
Philip. And, Madam, so shall I.
Mary. O, will you ? will you ?
 I am faint with fear that you will come
 no more.
Philip. Ay, ay ; but many voices call
 me hence.
Mary. Voices—I hear unhappy ru-
 mours—nay,
 I say not, I believe. What voices call you

Dearer than mine that should be dearest
to you?

Alas, my Lord! what voices and how
many?

Philip. The voices of Castile and
Aragon,

Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan,—
The voices of Franche-Comté, and the
Netherlands,

The voices of Peru and Mexico,
Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines,
And all the fair spice-islands of the East.

Mary (admiringly). You are the
mightiest monarch upon earth,
I but a little Queen; and so, indeed,
Need you the more; and wherefore could
you not

Helm the huge vessel of your state, my
liege,

Here, by the side of her who loves you
most?

Philip. No, Madam, no! a candle in
the sun

Is all but smoke—a star beside the
moon

Is all but lost; your people will not crown
me—

Your people are as cheerless as your
clime;

Hate me and mine: witness the brawls,
the gibbets.

Here swings a Spaniard—there an Eng-
lishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-
plexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and return—
but now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help me?

They hate me also for my love to you,
My Philip; and these judgments on the
land—

Harvestless autumns, horrible agues,
plague—

Philip. The blood and sweat of
heretics at the stake

Is God's best dew upon the barren field.
Burn more!

Mary. I will, I will; and you will
stay?

Philip. Have I not said? Madam, I
came to see

Your Council and yourself to declare
war.

Mary. Sir, there are many English in
your ranks

To help your battle.

Philip. So far, good. I say
I came to sue your Council and yourself
To declare war against the King of France.

Mary. Not to see me?

Philip. Ay, Madam, to see you.
Unalterably and pesteringly fond! [*Exit.*]
But, soon or late you must have war with
France;

King Henry warns your traitor at his
hearth.

Carew is gone, and Thomas Stafford
there.

Courtenay, belike—

Mary. A fool and featherhead!

Philip. Ay, but they use his name.
In brief, this Henry

Stirs up your head against you to the
intent

That you may lose your English heritage.
And then, your Scottish rascal's marry-
ing

The Dauphin, he would weld France,
[England, Scotland]

Into one sword to hack at Spain and me.

Mary. And yet the Pope is now
allied with France,

You make your wars upon him down in
Italy:—

Philip, can that be well?

Philip. Goodness, you, Madam;

You must abide my judgment, and my
father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy war.
The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of
Naples :

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors,
Saracens.

The Pope has push'd his horns beyond
his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now,
Duke Alva will but touch him on the horns,
And he withdraws ; and of his holy head—
For Alva is true son of the true church—
No hair is harm'd. Will you not help
me here ?

Mary. Alas ! the Council will not
hear of war.

They say your wars are not the wars of
England.

They will not lay more taxes on a land
So hunger-nipt and wretched ; and you
know

The crown is poor. We have given the
church-lands back :

The nobles would not ; nay, they clapt
their hands

Upon their swords when ask'd ; and
therefore God

Is hard upon the people. What's to be
done ?

Sir, I will move them in your cause again,
And we will raise us loans and subsidies
Among the merchants ; and Sir Thomas
Gresham

Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the
Jews.

Philip. Madam, my thanks.

Mary. And you will stay your
going ?

Philip. And further to discourage and
lay lame

The plots of France, altho' you love her
not,

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.
She stands between you and the Queen of
Scots.

Mary. The Queen of Scots at least is
Catholic.

Philip. Ay, Madam, Catholic ; but
I will not have

The King of France the King of England
too.

Mary. But she's a heretic, and, when
I am gone,

Brings the new learning back.

Philip. It must be done.

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.

Mary. Then it is done ; but you will
stay your going

Somewhat beyond your settled purpose ?
Philip. No !

Mary. What, not one day ?

Philip. You beat upon the rock.

Mary. And I am broken there.

Philip. Is this a place

To wail in, Madam ? what ! a public hall.
Go in, I pray you.

Mary. Do not seem so changed.

Say go ; but only say it lovingly.

Philip. You do mistake. I am not
one to change.

I never loved you more.

Mary. Sire, I obey you.

Come quickly.

Philip. Ay. [*Exit Mary.*]

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

Feria (aside). The Queen in tears !

Philip. Feria !

Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to
mine ear—

How doubly aged this Queen of ours hath
grown

Since she lost hope of bearing us a child ?

Feria. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd
it, so have I.

Philip. Hast thou not likewise mark'd

Elizabeth,

How fair and royal—like a Queen, indeed?

Feria. Allow me the same answer as
before—

That if your Grace hath mark'd her, so
have I.

Philip. Good, now; methinks my
Queen is like enough

To leave me by and by.

Feria. To leave you, sire?

Philip. I mean not like to live.

Elizabeth—

To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,
We meant to wed her; but I am not sure
She will not serve me better—so my Queen
Would leave me—as—my wife.

Feria. Sire, even so.

Philip. She will not leave Prince
Philibert of Savoy.

Feria. No, sire.

Philip. I have to pray you, some
odd time,

To sound the Princess carelessly on this;
Not as from me, but as your phantasy;
And tell me how she takes it.

Feria. Sire, I will.

Philip. I am not certain but that
Philibert

Shall be the man; and I shall urge his
suit

Upon the Queen, because I am not
certain:

You understand, *Feria.*

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. And if you be not secret in
this matter,

You understand me there, too?

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. You must be sweet and supple,
like a Frenchman.

She is none of those who loathe the
honeycomb. [*Exit Feria.*]

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My liege, I bring you goodly
intelligence.

Philip. Well!

Renard. There will be war with
France, it is but my hope.

See Thomas Stafford, a bold hearted man,
Sailing from France, with thirty English-
men.

Hath taken Sourdis' Castle, north of
York;

Proclaims himself protector, and affirms
The Queen has forfeited her right to reign
By marriage with an alien—her thing—

As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt
This buzz will soon be silenced; but the

Council

(I have talk'd with some already) are for
war.

This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in
France;

They show their teeth upon it; and your
Grace,

So you will take advice of mine, should
they

Yet for awhile, to sleep and guide the
event.

Philip. Good! Renard, I will say
no then.

Renard. Alas, sire,

Might I not try—to please your wife, the
Queen?

Philip. Ay, Renard, I would have to put
it on. [*Renard.*]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE
PALACE.

MARY and CARDINAL POPE.

LADY CATERINE and ALICE in the
background.

Mary. Renard! Pooh, what news hath
plagued thy heart?

What makes thy favour like the bloodless
head

Fall'n on the block, and held up by the
hair?

Philip?—

Pole. No, Philip is as warm in life
As ever.

Mary. Ay, and then as cold as ever.
Is Calais taken?

Pole. Cousin, there hath chanced
A sharper harm to England and to Rome,
Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
Was ever just, and mild, and fatherlike;
But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the
Fourth,

Not only reft me of that legateship
Which Julius gave me, and the legateship
Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but worse—
And yet I must obey the Holy Father,
And so must you, good cousin;—worse
than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—
hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
Before his Inquisition.

Mary. I knew it, cousin,
But held from you all papers sent by
Rome,
That you might rest among us, till the
Pope,

To compass which I wrote myself to
Rome,
Reversed his doom, and that you might
not seem
To disobey his Holiness.

Pole. He hates Philip;
He is all Italian, and he hates the
Spaniard;

He cannot dream that I advised the war;
He strikes thro' me at Philip and yourself.
Nay, but I know it of old, he hates me
too;

So brands me in the stare of Christendom
A heretic!

Now, even now, when bow'd before my
time,

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be out;
When I should guide the Church in peace
at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,
And all my lifelong labour to uphold
The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,
When I was ruler in the patrimony,
I was too lenient to the Lutheran,
And I and learned friends among ourselves
Would freely canvass certain Lutheran-
isms.

What then, he knew I was no Lutheran.
A heretic!

He drew this shaft against me to the head,
When it was thought I might be chosen
Pope,

But then withdrew it. In full consistory,
When I was made Archbishop, he
approved me.

And how should he have sent me Legate
hither,
Deeming me heretic? and what heresy
since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleric,
A drinker of black, strong, volcanic wines,
That ever make him fierier. I, a heretic!
Your Highness knows that in pursuing
heresy

I have gone beyond your late Lord
Chancellor,—

He cried Enough! enough! before his
death.—

Gone beyond him and mine own natural
man

(It was God's cause); so far they call me
now,

The scourge and butcher of their English
church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward is
Heaven itself.

Pol. They groan athen : they swarm
into the fire

Like flies—for what ? no dogma. They
know nothing ;

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pol. Have done my best, and as a
faithful son,

That all day long hath wrought his father's
work,

When back he comes at evening hath the
door

slut on him by the father whom he loved,
His early follies cast into his teeth,

And the poor son turn'd out into the street
To sleep, to die—I shall die of it, cousin.

Mary. I pray you be not so disconso-
late ;

I still will do mine utmost with the Pope.
Poor cousin !

Have I not been the fast friend of your
life

Since mine began, and it was thought we
two

Might make one flesh, and cleave unto
each other

As man and wife.

Pol. Ah, cousin, I remember
How I would dandle you upon my knee

At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing
once

With your huge father ; he look'd the
Great Harry,

You but his cockboat ; prettily you did it,
And innocently. No—we were not made

One flesh in happiness, no happiness
here ;

But now we are made one flesh in misery ;
Our bridemaids are not lovely—Disap-

pointment,

Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,

Labour-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.

Please, cousin, pardon ! I was sad at heart
myself.

Pol. Our altar is a mound of dead
men's folly,

Dug from the grave that yawns for us
beyond ;

And there is one Death stands behind the
Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind the
Bride—

Mary. Have you been looking at the
'Dance of Death ?'

Pol. No ; but these libellous papers
which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you here—
the Pope

Pointing at me with 'Pole, the heretic,
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn
thyself,

Or I will burn thee ;' and this other ;
see !—

'We pray continually for the death
Of our anointed Queen and Cardinal
Pole.'

This last—I dare not read it out. (*Aside.*

Mary. Away !

Why do you bring me these ?

I thought you knew me better. I never
read,

I tear them ; they come back upon my
dreams.

The hands that writ them should be
burnt clean off

As Cranmer's, and the friends that give
them

Tongue-torn with pincers, look'd to death,
or lie

Famishing in black cells, while famish'd
fish

Eat them alive. Why do they bring me
these ?

Do you mean to drive me mad ?

Pol. I had forgotten

How these poor libels trouble you. Your pardon,
Sweet cousin, and farewell ! ' O bubble world,
Whose colours in a moment break and fly !'
Why, who said that ? I know not — true enough !

[*Puts up the papers, all but the last, which falls. Exit Pole.*]

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a mocking one,
And heard these two, there might be sport for him. [*Aside.*]

Mary. Clarence, they hate me ; even while I speak

There lurks a silent dagger, listening
In some dark closet, some long gallery,
drawn,

And panting for my blood as I go by.

Lady Clarence. Nay, Madam, there be loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one !

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam ; but Sir Nicholas Heath, the Chancellor,
Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him ?

Lady Clarence. Well, Madam, he may bring you news from Philip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady Clarence. Let me first put up your hair ;

It tumbles all abroad.

Mary. And the gray dawn
Of an old age that never will be mine
Is all the clearer seen. No, no ; what matters ?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such grievous news
I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is taken.

Mary. What traitor spoke ? Here, let my cousin Pole
Seize him and burn him for a Lutheran.

Heath. Her Highness is unwell. I will retire.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your Chancellor, Sir Nicholas Heath.

Mary. Sir Nicholas ! I am stunn'd — Nicholas Heath ?

Methought some traitor smote me on the head.

What said you, my good Lord, that our brave English

Had sallied out from Calais and driven back
The Frenchmen from their trenches ?

Heath. Alas ! no. That gateway to the mainland over which
Our flag hath floated for two hundred years
Is France again.

Mary. So ; but it is not lost — Not yet. Send out : let England as of old
Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep into
The prey they are rending from her — ay,
and rend

The renders too. Send out, send out,
and make

Musters in all the counties ; gather all
From sixteen years to sixty ; collect the
fleet ;

Let every craft that carries sail and gun
Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not
taken yet ?

Heath. Guisnes is not taken yet.

Mary. There yet is hope.

Heath. Ah, Madam, but your people
are so cold ;

I do much fear that England will not care.
Methinks there is no manhood left among
us.

Mary. Send out ; I am too weak to
stir abroad ;

Tell my mind to the Council — to the
Parliament :

Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art cold
thyself.

To babble of their coldness. O would I
were

My father for an hour! Away now—
quick! *[Exit Heath.*
I hoped I had served God with all my
might!

It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have
rebuilt

Your shrines, set up your broken images;
be comfortable to me. Suffer not
That my brief reign in England be
defamed

Thou' all her angry chronicles hereafter
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais,
Philip,

We have made war upon the Holy Father
All for your sake: what good could come
of that?

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, not
against the Holy Father;
You did but help King Philip's war with
France,

Your troops were never down in Italy.

Mary. I am a byword. Heretic and
rebel

Point at me and make merry. Philip
gone!

And Calais gone! Time that I were
gone too!

Lady Clarence. Nay, if the field
gutter had a voice

And cried I was not clean, what should
I care?

Or you, for heretic cries? And I be-
lieve,

Spoke of your melancholy Sir Nicholas,
Your England is as loyal as myself.

Mary (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).

There, there! another paper!
Said you not

Mary of Cleve—was loyal? Shall I try
If that be true of another?

Lady Clarence. Let it be, so it be
God's pleasure! I have never yet
found one. *[Exit.*

Mary (reads). 'Your people hate you
as your husband hates you.'

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?
what sin

Beyond all grace, all pardon? Malice
of God,

Thou knowest never woman meant so well,
And fared so ill in this disastrous world.
My people hate me and desire my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, no.

Mary. My husband hates me, and
desires my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam; those
are lies.

Mary. I hate myself, and I desire my
death.

Lady Clarence. Long live your
Majesty! Shall Alice sing you
One of her pleasant songs? Alas, my child,
Bring us your lute. *[Alice goes.* They
say the gloom of Saul

Was lighten'd by young David's lute.

Mary. Too young!
And never knew a Philip *(recalls Athol).*
Give me the lute.

He hates me!

[The lute.]

Heathen heart of woman hater, is breathing?
Howe'er sorrow fits, I trust, and heart it had be-
lieved.

Love, my love, come here, and love, that say the
world is nothing—

Love, love, love!

Love, all I have round this breast, and they the
worlding!

Love, will thy eye follow love, and not be won-
taken!

Love, my love | my love, my love | my love, my
love, are forlorn—

Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away ! not low enough for me !

Alice. Your Grace hath a low voice.

Mary. How dare you say it ?

Even for that he hates me. A low voice
Lost in a wilderness where none can hear !
A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea !
A low voice from the dust and from the
grave

(*Sitting on the ground.*) There, 'am I
low enough now ?

Alice. Good Lord ! how grim and
ghastly looks her Grace,

With both her knees drawn upward to
her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my
father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were
found

Sitting, and in this fashion ; she looks a
corpse.

Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.

Lady Magdalen. Madam, the Count
de Feria waits without,

In hopes to see your Highness.

Lady Clarence (*pointing to Mary*). Wait
he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor
hears,

And may not speak for hours.

Lady Magdalen. Unhappiest

Of Queens and wives and women !

Alice (*in the foreground with Lady
Magdalen*). And all along

Of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Not so loud ! Our
Clarence there

Sees ever such an aureole round the Queen,
It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,
Who stands the nearest to her.

Alice. Ay, this Philip ;

I used to love the Queen with all my
heart—

God help me, but methinks I love her less
For such a dotage upon such a man.

I would I were as tall and strong as you.

Lady Magdalen. I seem half-shamed
at times to be so tall.

Alice. You are the stateliest deer in
all the herd—

Beyond his aim—but I am small and
scandalous,

And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Why ?

I never heard him utter worse of you

Than that you were low-statured.

Alice. Does he think

Low stature is low nature, or all women's
Low as his own ?

Lady Magdalen. There you strike in
the nail.

This coarseness is a want of phantasy.

It is the low man thinks the woman low ;
Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as
well as dull.

How dared he ?

Lady Magdalen. Stupid soldiers oft
are bold.

Poor lads, they see not what the general
sees,

A risk of utter ruin. I am *not*

Beyond his aim, or was not.

Alice. Who ? Not you ?

Tell, tell me ; save my credit with myself.

Lady Magdalen. I never breathed it
to a bird in the eaves,

Would not for all the stars and maiden
moon

Our drooping Queen should know ! In
Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor ;

And I was robing ;—this poor throat of
mine,

Barer than I should wish a man to see
it,—

When he we speak of drove the window
back,

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal
hand;

But by God's providence a good stout staff
lay near me; and you know me strong
of arm;

I do believe I lam'd his Majesty's

For a day or two, tho', give the Devil
his due,

I never found he bore me any spite.

Aliv. I would she could have wedded
that poor youth,

My Lord of Devon—light enough, God
knows,

As I mixt with Wyatt's rising—and the
boy

Not out of him—but neither cold, coarse,
cruel,

And more than all—no Spaniard.

Lady Clarence. Not so loud.
Lord Devon, girls! what are you whis-
pering here?

Aliv. Probing an old state-secret—
how it chanced

That this young Earl was sent on foreign
travel,

Not lost his head.

Lady Clarence. There was no proof
against him.

Aliv. Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner
intercept

A letter which the Count de Noailles
wrote

To that dead traitor Wyatt, with full proof
Of Courtenay's treason? What became
of that?

Lady Clarence. Some say that
Gardiner, out of love for him,
burnt it, and some relate that it was lost
When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's
house in Southwark.

Let dead things rest.

Aliv. Ay, and with him stralied
Aliv in Italy.

Lady Clarence. Much stralied, I trust,
Had put off levity and put government on.
The foreign courts report him in the
manner

Not as his young person and old should.
It might be so—but all is over now;

Hexaght's doll in the ligens of Venice,
And died in Padua.

Mary (singing up sadly). Died in
the true faith?

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam, happily.

Mary. Happier be than I.

Lady Middleton. It seems her Highness
hath awaken'd. Think you
That I might dare to tell her that the
Count—

Mary. I will see no man hence, but
evermore,

Saving my confessor and my cousin Peto.

Lady Middleton. It is the Count de
Ferra, my dear lady.

Mary. What Count?

Lady Middleton. The Count de Ferra,
from his Majesty

King Philip.

Mary. Philip! speak! I long for my hair!
Throw cushions on that one, and make it
shine like.

Arrange my dress—the gipsies will
show!

That Philip brought me a sad happy
days!—

That owns all. So—am I somewhat
Queenlike,

Ends of the mightiest accounts upon
earth?

Lady Clarence. Ay, as your Grace
would bid a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he sings a letter.
I may be

Belief I read it. Let me see how it comes.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA (*kneels*).

Feria. I trust your Grace is well.
(*Aside*) How her hand burns !

Mary. I am not well, but it will better
me,

Sir Count, to read the letter which you
bring.

Feria. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How ! no letter ?

Feria. His Highness is so vex'd with
strange affairs—

Mary. That his own wife is no affair
of his.

Feria. Nay, Madam, nay ! he sends
his veriest love,

And says, he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed ?

You, sir, do *you* remember what *you* said
When last you came to England ?

Feria. Madam, I brought
My King's congratulations ; it was hoped
Your Highness was once more in happy
state

To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more ;
You said he would come quickly. I had
horses

On all the road from Dover, day and
night ;

On all the road from Harwich, night and
day ;

But the child came not, and the husband
came not ;

And yet he will come quickly. . . Thou
hast learnt

Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no
need

For Philip so to shame himself again.

Return,

And tell him that I know he comes no
more.

Tell him at last I know his love is dead,

And that I am in state to bring forth
death—

Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth,
And not to me !

Feria. Mere compliments and wishes.
But shall I take some message from your
Grace ?

Mary. Tell her to come and close my
dying eyes,
And wear my crown, and dance upon my
grave.

Feria. Then I may say your Grace
will see your sister ?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and
sunshine.

I would we had you, Madam, in our warm
Spain.

You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away !

I sicken of his readiness.

Lady Clarence. My Lord Count,
Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Feria (*kneels, and kisses her hand*). I
wish her Highness better. (*Aside*)

How her hand burns ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSE-
HOLD, ATTENDANTS.

Elizabeth. There's half an angel
wrong'd in your account ;

Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it
Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I
wrong'd you, Madam.

[*Exit Steward.*]

Attendant. 'The Count de FERIA, from
the King of Spain.

Elizabeth. Ah !—let him enter. Nay,
you need not go :

[*To her Ladies.*]

Remain within the chamber, but apart.
We'll have no private conferences. — Wel-
come to England!

Enter FERIA.

Feria. Fair island star!

Elizabeth. I shun! What else,
Sir Count?

Feria. As far as France, and into
Philip's heart.

My King would know if you be fairly
served,

And lodged, and treated.

Elizabeth. You see the lodging, sir,
I am well-served, and am in everything
Most loyal and most grateful to the
Queen.

Feria. You should be grateful to my
master, too.

He spoke of this; and unto him you owe
That Mary hath acknowledged your her
heir.

Elizabeth. No, not to her nor him;
but to the people,

Who know my right, and love me, as I
love

The people! whom God aid!

Feria. You will be Queen.

And, were I Philip—

Elizabeth. Wherefore pause you—
what?

Feria. Nay, but I speak from mine
own self, not him;

Your royal sister cannot last; your hand
Will be much coveted! What a delicate
one!

Our Spanish ladies have none such—and
there,

Were you in Spain, this fine fair gossamer
gold—

Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty
dawn—

That hovers round your shoulder—

Feria. In it doth consist

Truth, some horses will say.

Feria.—would be charmed a miracle.

Elizabeth. Your Philip hath gold hair
and golden hand!

There must be ladies more worth than like
mine.

Feria. Some few of Castile's kind have
golden hair,

But none like yours.

Elizabeth. I am happy you approve it.

Feria. But as to Philip and your
Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match with
Spain,

What hinders but that Spain and England
join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire earth
has known.

Spain would be England on her seas, and
England

Mistress of the Indies.

Elizabeth. It may chance, that
England

Will be the Mistress of the Indies yet,

Without the help of Spain.

Feria. Impossible;

Except you put Spain down.

Wife of the mark will be a husband's
dream.

Elizabeth. Perhaps; but we have
someone, Count de Feria.

I take it that the King hath spoken to you;
But is Don Carlos such a goodly match?

Feria. Don Carlos, Madam, is but
twelve years old.

Elizabeth. Ay, tell the King that I
will nurse upon it;

He is my good friend, and I would keep
him so:

But—he would have me Catholic of Rome,
And that I cannot bear he; and, sir, till
now

My sister's marriage, and my father's
marriages,

Make me full fain to live and die a maid.
But I am much beholden to your King.
Have you aught else to tell me?

Feria. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from the
Queen

That she would see your Grace before she
—died.

Elizabeth. God's death! and where-
fore spake you not before?

We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses there,
without!

I am much beholden to the King, your
master.

Why did you keep me prating? Horses,
there! [*Exit Elizabeth, &c.*]

Feria. So from a clear sky falls the
thunderbolt!

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry
Philip,

Then I and he will snaffle your 'God's
death,'

And break your paces in, and make you
tame;

God's death, forsooth—you do not know
King Philip. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—LONDON. BEFORE THE
PALACE.

*A light burning within. Voices of the
night passing.*

First. Is not yon light in the Queen's
chamber?

Second. Ay,

They say she's dying.

First. So is Cardinal Pole.
May the great angels join their wings,
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

Second. Amen. Come on.
[*Exeunt.*]

TWO OTHERS.

First. There's the Queen's light. I
hear she cannot live.

Second. God curse her and her Legate!
Gardiner burns

Already; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
Were but a sort of winter; sir, in Guern-
sey,

I watch'd a woman burn; and in her
agony

The mother came upon her—a child was
born—

And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the fire,
That, being but baptised in fire, the
babe

Might be in fire for ever. Ah, good
neighbour,

There should be something fierier than
fire

To yield them their deserts.

First. Amen to all
Your wish, and further.

A Third Voice. Deserts! Amen to
what? Whose deserts? Yours? You
have a gold ring on your finger, and soft
raiment about your body; and is not the
woman up yonder sleeping after all she
has done, in peace and quietness, on a
soft bed, in a closed room, with light,
fire, physic, tendance; and I have seen
the true men of Christ lying famine-dead
by scores, and under no ceiling but the
cloud that wept on them, not for them.

First. Friend, tho' so late, it is not
safe to preach.

You had best go home. What are you?

Third. What am I? One who cries
continually with sweat and tears to the
Lord God that it would please Him out
of His infinite love to break down all

kingship and queenship, all priesthood and prelacy; to cancel and abolish all bonds of human allegiance, all the magistracy, all the nobles, and all the wealthy; and to send us again, according to His promise, the one King, the Christ, and all things in common, as in the day of the first church, when Christ Jesus was King.

First. If ever I heard a madman,—
let's away!

Why, you long-winded— Sir, you go
beyond me.

I pride myself on being moderate.

Good night! Go home. Besides, you
curse so loud,

The watch will hear you. Get you home
at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—LONDON. A ROOM IN
THE PALACE.

A Gallery on one side. The moonlight streaming through a range of windows on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN D'ACRES, ALICE, QUEEN, facing the Gallery. A writing-table in front. QUEEN comes to the table and writes and goes again, facing the Gallery.

Lady Clarence. Mine eyes are dim:
what hath she written? read.

Alice. 'I am dying, Philip; come to
me.'

Lady Magdalen. There—up and down,
poor lady, up and down.

Alice. And how her shadow crosses
one by one

The moonlight casements pattern'd on
the wall,

Following her like her sorrow. She
turns again.

[*Queen sits and writes, and goes again.*]

Lady Clarence. What hath she written
now?

Alice. Nothing; but 'come, come,
come,' and all awry,

And blotted by her tears. This cannot
last. [*Queen returns.*]

Mary. I whistle to the bird his broken
cage,

And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*]

Calais gone—Guines gone, too—and
Philip gone!

Lady Clarence. Dear Madam, Philip
is but at the wars;

I cannot doubt but that he comes again;
And he is with you in a measure still.

I never look'd upon so fair a likeness

As your great King in armour there, his
hand

Upon his helmet.

[*Pointing to the portrait of Philip on
the wall.*]

Mary. Doth he not look noble?
I had heard of him in battle over seas.

And I would have my warrior all in arms.
He said it was not comely to stand
helmeted

Before the Queen. He had his gracious
moment.

Altho' you'll not believe me. How he
smiles

As if he loved me yet!

Lady Clarence. And so he does.

Mary. He never loved me—nay, he
could not love me.

It was his father's policy against France.
I am eleven years older than he.

Poor boy! [*Writes.*]

Alice. That was a lusty boy of twenty-
seven; [*And.*]

Poor enough in God's grace!

Mary. —And all in vain!

The Queen of Scots is married to the
Dauphin,

And Charles, the lord of this low world,
is gone ;

And all his wars and wisdoms past away ;
And in a moment I shall follow him.

Lady Clarence. Nay, dearest Lady,
see your good physician.

Mary. Drugs—but he knows they
cannot help me—says

That rest is all—tells me I must not
think—

That I must rest—I shall rest by-and-by.
Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when
he springs,—

And maims himself against the bars, say
'rest' :

Why, you must kill him if you would have
him rest—

Dead or alive you cannot make him happy.

Lady Clarence. Your Majesty has
lived so pure a life,

And done such mighty things by Holy
Church,

I trust that God will make you happy yet.

Mary. What is the strange thing
happiness? Sit down here :

Tell me thine happiest hour.

Lady Clarence. I will, if that
May make your Grace forget yourself a
little.

There runs a shallow brook across our field
For twenty miles, where the black crow
flies five,

And doth so bound and babble all the way
As if itself were happy. It was May-time,
And I was walking with the man I loved.
I loved him, but I thought I was not loved.
And both were silent, letting the wild
brook

Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd
one

From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave
it me.

I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once
I felt his arms about me, and his lips—

Mary. O God ! I have been too slack,
too slack ;

There are Hot Gospellers even among
our guards—

Nobles we dared not touch. We have
but burnt

The heretic priest, workmen, and women
and children.

Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck,
wrath,—

We have so play'd the coward ; but by
God's grace,

We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up
The Holy Office here—garner the wheat,
And burn the tares with unquenchable fire !
Burn !—

Fie, what a savour ! tell the cooks to close
The doors of all the offices below.

Latimer !

Sir, we are private with our women here—
Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fel-
low—

Thou light a torch that never will go out !
Tis out—mine flames. Women, the
Holy Father

Has ta'en the legateship from our cousin
Pole—

Was that well done? and poor Pole pines
of it,

As I do, to the death. I am but a woman,
I have no power.—Ah, weak and meek
old man,

Seven-fold dishonour'd even in the sight
Of thine own sectaries—No, no. No
pardon !—

Why that was false : there is the right
hand still

Beckons me hence.

Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for
treason,

Remember that ? 'twas I and Banner did
it,

And Pöle ; we are three to one—Have
you found mercy there,

Grant it me here : and see, he smiles and
goes,

Gentle as in life.

Alice. Madam, who goes ? King
Philip ?

Mary. No, Philip comes and goes,
but never goes.

Women, when I am dead,

Open my heart, and there you will find
written

Two names, Philip and Calais ; open
his,—

So that he have one,—

You will find Philip only, policy,
policy,—

Ay, worse than that—not one hear true
to me !

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd vice !
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.

Hast thou a knife ?

Alice. Ay, Madam, but o' God's
mercy—

Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would
peril mine own soul

By slaughter of the body ? I could not,
girl.

Not this way—callous with a constant
stripe,

Unwoundable. The knife !

Alice. Take heed, take heed !
The blade is keen as death.

Mary. This Philip shall not
stare in upon me in my haggardness ;

Old, miserable, diseased,

Incapable of children. Come thou down.

[*Cuts out the picture and throws it down.*

Lie there. (*Wails*) O God, I have
kill'd my Philip !

Alice. No,

Madam, you have but cut the canvas out.
We can replace it.

Mary. All is well then ; rest—

I will to rest ; by name, I must have rest.

[*Creeps ' Elizabeth ' in distress.*

A cry : What's that ? Elizabeth ? reviv'd ?

A new Northumberland, another Wyatt ?

I'll fight it on the tomb-stone of the grave.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your royal
sister comes to see you.

Mary. I will not see her.

Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my
sister ?

I will see none except the priest. Your
arm. [*To Lady Clarence.*

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet wurn
smile

Among thy patient wrinkles—Help me
hence. [*Exeunt.*

*The PRISON DOOR. Enter ELIZABETH
and SIR WILLIAM CECIL.*

Elizabeth. Good counsel yours—

No one in waiting ? still,

As if the chamberlain were Death himself !

The room she sleeps in—is not this the
way ?

No, that way there are voices. Am
too late ?

Cecil. . . . Good guide me but I have the
way. [*Enter Elizabeth.*

Cecil. Many points weather'd, many
potholes ones,

At last a harbour opens ; but thence

Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—
methinks it is

To better men, not big it—have a mind—
Nur let France's talk, or dream of worlds

to be,

Miscellaneous things about her—sudden
portholes

For thou, or little—sunk rocks ; no
passionate fash—

But—if let be—balance and compromise ;
 Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her—a
 Tudor
 School'd by the shadow of death—a
 Boleyn, too,
 Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.

Enter ALICE.

How is the good Queen now ?

Alice. Away from Philip.

Back in her childhood—prattling to her
 mother

Of her betrothal to the Emperor Charles,
 And childlike-jealous of him again—and
 once

She thank'd her father sweetly for his book
 Against that godless German. Ah, those
 days

Were happy. It was never merry world
 In England, since the Bible came among
 us.

Cecil. And who says that ?

Alice. It is a saying among the
 Catholics.

Cecil. It never will be merry world in
 England,
 Till all men have their Bible, rich and
 poor.

Alice. The Queen is dying, or you
 dare not say it.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth. The Queen is dead.

Cecil. Then here she stands ! my
 homage.

Elizabeth. She knew me, and ac-
 knowledged me her heir,

Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep the
 Faith ;

Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away
 in peace.

I left her lying still and beautiful,
 More beautiful than in life. Why would
 you vex yourself,

Poor sister ? Sir, I swear I have no heart
 To be your Queen. To reign is restless
 fence,

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is with
 the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring was
 nupt :

And she loved much : pray God she be
 forgiven.

Cecil. Peace with the dead, who never
 were at peace !

Yet she loved one so much—I needs must
 say—

That never English monarch dying left
 England so little.

Elizabeth. But with Cecil's aid
 And others, if our person be secured
 From traitor stabs—we will make England
 great.

*Enter PAGET, and other LORDS OF THE
 COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL,
 &c.*

Lords. God save Elizabeth, the Queen
 of England !

Bagenhall. God save the Crown ! the
 Papacy is no more.

Paget (aside). Are we so sure of
 that ?

Acclamation. God save the Queen !

HAROLD :

A DRAMA.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HQN. LORD LYTTON,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

MY DEAR LORD LYTTON,—After old-world records—such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou,—Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his 'Harold' to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my 'Harold' to yourself.

A. TENNYSON.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom of spring—
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying ' with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest : ' and fancy hears the ring
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,
And Saxon battleaxe clang on Norman helm.
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm :
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slender'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood !
O strange hate-healer Time ! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago :
Might, right ? ay good, so all things make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below.

DRAMATIC PERSONS :

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND, created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict.

ALBERT, Archbishop of York.

TIEB NICHOLAS BISHOP DE TROUBEN.

HAROLD, Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England.

TOSTIG, Earl of Northumbria.

GUTH, Earl of East Angles.

LEOFWIC, Earl of Kent and Essex.

WILENHOTH.

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM MALET, a Norman Noble.*

EDWIN, Earl of Mercia.

ALAN OF ALICE of

MORVAN, Earl of Northumbria after Tostig.

Mercia.

GAMBEL, a Northumbrian Thane.

GOV. Count of Ponthieu.

ROBE, a Ponthieu Fisherman.

HUGH MALET, a Norman Knight.

OSWIC and ANGERIC, Canons from Waltham.

THE QUEEN, Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Canute.

ALDWIC, Daughter of Alice and William of Saxony, King of Wessex.

EDITH, Ward of King Edward.

Courtiery, Early and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Crosses of Waltham, Fishermen, &c.

* . . . quidem partim Normannorum et Anglorum
Computer Herald. (*Grey of Arden*, 107.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LONDON. THE KING'S
PALACE.

(A comet seen through the open window.)

ALDWYTH, GAMEL, COURTIERI *talking together.*

First Courtier. Lo! there once more
—this is the seventh night!

Yon grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd
scourge

Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

First Courtier. Look you, there's a star
That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in
Hell who skips and flies
To right and left, and cannot scape the
flame.

Second Courtier. Steam'd upward
from the undescendable

Abysm.

First Courtier. Or floated downward
from the throne

Of God Almighty.

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,

What thinkest thou this means?

Gamel. War, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Dost this affright thee?

Gamel. Mightily, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Stand by me then, and look
upon my face,

Not on the comet.

(*Enter MORCAR.*)

Brother! why so pale?

Morcar. It glares in heaven, it flares
upon the Thames,

The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees,—they cannot speak
—for awe;

Look to the skies, then to the river, strike
Their hearts, and hold their babies up to it.

I think that they would Molochize them
too,

To have the heavens clear.

Aldwyth. They fright not me.

(*Enter LEOFWIN, after him GURTH.*)

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks
of this!

Morcar. Lord Leofwin, dost thou
believe, that these

Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder
mean

The doom of England and the wrath of
Heaven?

Bishop of London (passing). Did ye
not cast with bestial violence

Our holy Norman bishops down from all
Their thrones in England? I alone
remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

Leofwin. With us, or thee?

Bishop of London. Did ye not outlaw
your archbishop Robert,

Robert of Jumiéges—well-nigh murder
him too?

Is there no reason for the wrath of
Heaven?

Leofwin. Why then the wrath of
Heaven hath three tails,

The devil only one.

[*Exit Bishop of London.*]

(*Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.*)

Ask our Archbishop.

Stigand should know the purposes of
Heaven.

Stigand. Not I. I cannot read the
face of heaven;

Perhaps our vines will grow the better for
it.

Leofwin (laughing). He can but read
the king's face on his coins.

Stigand. Ay, ay, young lord, *there* the
king's face is power.

Gamel. O father, mock not at a public fear,
 But tell us, is this pendent hell in heaven
 A harm to England?

Stigand. Ask it of King Edward!
 And he may tell thee. I am a harm to
 England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*
 Who had my pallium from an Antipope!
 Not he the man—for in our wholy
 world

What's up is faith, what's down is heresy.
 Our friends, the Normans, help to shake
 his chair.

I have a Norman fever on me, son,
 And cannot answer sanely . . . What it
 means?

Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to HAROLD, who enters.*]

Harold (*seeing Gamel*). Hail, Gamel,
 son of Orm!

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend
 Gamel,

Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy
 life at home

Is easier than mine here. Look! am I
 not

Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

Gamel. Art thou sick, good Earl?

Harold. Sick as an autumn swallow
 for a voyage,

Sick for an idle week of hawk and hound
 beyond the seas—a change! When
 camest thou hither?

Gamel. To-day, good Earl.

Harold. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

Gamel. Nay, there be murmurs, for
 thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—
 Nothing as yet.

Harold. Stand by him, mine old
 friend,

Thou art a great voice in Northumberland!

Advise him: speak him bravely, he will
 hear thee.

He is possessed too far—stand close
 by him!

More talk of this tumultuous. If you would
 sign

Not blast us in our dreams—Well, to the
 Stigand—

[*To Stigand, who advances to him.*]

Stigand (*pointing to the comet*). War
 there, my son! is this the doom
 of England?

Harold. Why not the doom of all the
 world as well?

For all the world sees it as well as Eng-
 land.

These meteors came and went before our
 day,

Not harming any: it threatens us no more
 Than French or Norman. War? the
 worst that follows

Things that seem jerk'd out of the common
 rut

Of Nature is the best religion.

Who, seeing war in heaven, for heaven's
 credit

Makes it on earth clear look, where
 Edward draws

A hand too hither, leaning upon Tostig.
 He hath learnt to love our Tostig more
 of late.

Leofric. And he hath learn'd to spite
 the tiger in him,

To slay and beguile himself to the king's
 haul.

Gamel. I trust the kingly couch shall
 smother the will.

May serve to strow the tiger out of him.

Leofric. He hath as much of our
 tiger in him.

Our Tostig lives the hard and not the
 man.

Harold. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter KING, QUEEN, and TOSTIG.

Edward. In heaven signs!
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!
your Priests
Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
They scarce can read their Psalter; and
your churches
Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Norman-
land
God speaks thro' abler voices, as He
dwells
In statelier shrines. I say not this, as
being
Half Norman-blooded, nor as some have
held,
Because I love the Norman better—no,
But dreading God's revenge upon this
realm
For narrowness and coldness: and I say it
For the last time perchance, before I go
To find the sweet refreshment of the
Saints.
I have lived a life of utter purity:
I have builded the great church of Holy
Peter:
I have wrought miracles—to God the
glory—
And miracles will in my name be wrought
Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and
go—
I see the flashing of the gates of pearl—
And it is well with me, tho' some of you
Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am
gone
Woe, woe to England! I have had a
vision;
The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus
Have turn'd from right to left.
Harold. My most dear Master,
What matters? let them turn from left to
right
And sleep again.

Tostig. Too hardy with thy king!
A life of prayer and fasting well may see
Deeper into the mysteries of heaven
Than thou, good brother.

Aldwyth (aside). Sees he into thine,
That thou wouldst have his promise for
the crown?

Edward. Tostig says true; my son,
thou art too hard,
Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and
heaven:
But heaven and earth are threads of the
same loom,
Play into one another, and weave the web
That may confound thee yet.

Harold. Nay, I trust not,
For I have served thee long and honestly.

Edward. I know it, son; I am not
thankless: thou
Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for me
The weight of this poor crown, and left
me time

And peace for prayer to gain a better one.
Twelve years of service! England loves
thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

Aldwyth (aside). So, not Tostig!

Harold. And after those twelve years
a boon, my king,
Respite, a holiday: thyself wast wont
To love the chase: thy leave to set my
feet

On board, and hunt and hawk beyond
the seas!

Edward. What with this flaming
horror overhead?

Harold. Well, when it passes then.

Edward. Ay if it pass.
Go not to Normandy—go not to Nor-
mandy.

Harold. And wherefore not, my king,
to Normandy?
Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee?
I pray thee, let me hence and bring him
home.

Edward. Not thou, my son; some
other messenger.

Harold. And why not me, my lord,
to Normandy?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend and
mine?

Edward. I pray thee, do not go to
Normandy.

Harold. Because my father drove the
Normans out

Of England?—That was many a summer
gone—

Forgotten and forgiven by them and
thee.

Edward. Harold, I will not yield thee
leave to go.

Harold. Why then to Flanders. I
will hawk and hunt

in Flanders.

Edward. Be there not fair woods and
fields

In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the
Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out
And homeward. Tostig, I am faint
again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee.

[*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and
followed by Stigand, Morcar, and
Courtiers.*]

Harold. What lies upon the mind of
our good king

That he should harp this way on
Normandy?

Queen. Brother, the king is wiser than
he seems;

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the
king.

Harold. And how should know; and
—be the king so wise.—

Then Tostig too were wiser than he seems.
I love the man but not his phantoms.

[*Re-enter Tostig.*]

Well, brother,

When shall thou hear from thy Northan-
bria?

Tostig. When shall I have ought to
this 'When' from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my
Northambrina:

She is my mistress, let me look to her!

The King hath made me Earl; make me
not fool!

Nor make the King a fool, who made
me Earl!

Harold. No, Tostig—lest I make
myself a fool

Who made the King who made thee,
make thee Earl.

Tostig. Why chide me then? I thine
knewest I soon go wild.

Gurth. Come, come! as yet thou art
not gone so wild

But thou canst hear the howl and wail
of us.

Harold. So says old Gurth, for I
yet hear! thine earldom,

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their old
cross

Is yet a force among them; I saw it

But having light enough to Algon's
house

To strike thee down by—nay, this ghastly
spot

May land thine bones.

Tostig. My most worthy brother,
There is the quietest man in all the

world—

Ay, ay, and wise in peace and great in
war—

Pray God the people stress thee for
their king!

But all the powers of the house of Godwin
Are not enfram'd in thee.

Harold. Thank the Saints, no !
But thou hast drain'd them shallow by
thy tolls,

And thou art ever here about the King :
Thine absence well may seem a want of
care.

Cling to their love ; for, now the sons of
Godwin

Sit topmost in the field of England, envy,
Like the rough bear beneath the tree,
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

Tostig. Good counsel truly !
I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.

Harold. How goes it then with thy
Northumbria ? Well ?

Tostig. And wouldst thou that it went
aught else than well ?

Harold. I would it went as well as
with mine earldom,
Leofwin's and Gurth's.

Tostig. Ye govern milder men.

Gurth. We have made them milder
by just government.

Tostig. Ay, ever give yourselves your
own good word.

Leofwin. An honest gift, by all the
Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest ! but they bribe
Each other, and so often, an honest world
Will not believe them.

Harold. I may tell thee, Tostig,
I heard from thy Northumberland to-day.

Tostig. From spies of thine to spy
my nakedness

In my poor North !

Harold. There is a movement there,
A blind one—nothing yet.

Tostig. Crush it at once
With all the power I have !—I must—I
will !—

Crush it half-born ! Fool still ? or
wisdom there,

My wise head-shaking Harold ?

Harold. Make not thou
The nothing something. Wisdom when
in power

And wisest, should not frown as Power,
but smile

As kindness, watching all, till the true
must

Shall make her strike as Power : but
when to strike—

O Tostig, O dear brother—If they
prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear and
run

And break both neck and axle.

Tostig. Good again !
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour
not water

In the full vessel running out at top
To swamp the house.

Leofwin. Nor thou be a wild thing
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the hand
Would help thee from the trap.

Tostig. Thou playest in tune.

Leofwin. To the deaf adder thee, that
wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

Tostig. No more, no more !

Gurth. I likewise cry 'no more.'
Unwholesome talk

For Godwin's house ! Leofwin, thou hast
a tongue !

Tostig, thou lookst as thou would'st
spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by ! Come,
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity ;
Let kith and kin stand close as our shield-
wall,

Who breaks us then ? I say, thou hast a
tongue,

And Tostig is not strong enough to bear it.
Yes him not, Leofwin.

Tostig. No, I am not weak,—
Altho' ye seek to vex me, and spoil all.
I have to make reuer of my good god here
To the good king who gave us—not to
you—

Not any of you;—I am not weak at all.

Harold. The king? the king is ever
at his prayers:

In all that handles matter of the state
I am the king.

Tostig. That shalt thou never be
If I can thwart thee.

Harold. Brother, brother!

Tostig. Away!
[*Exit Tostig.*]

Queen. Spite of this grisly star ye
three must gall

First Tostig.

Leofwin. Tostig, sister, galls himself;
He cannot smell a rose but pricks his nose
Against the thorn, and rails against the
rose.

Queen. I am the only nose of all the
stock

That never thorn'd him; Edward loves
him, so

Ye hate him. Harold always loved him.

Why—how they fought when boys—and,
Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!

Harold. Why, boys will fight.
Leofwin would often fight me, and I beat
him.

Even old Gurth would fight. I had
much ado

To hold mine own against old Gurth.
Old Gurth,

We fought like great states for grave
cause; but Tostig—

On a sudden—at a something—for a
nothing—

The boy would sit me back, and when
we fought

I prosper'd, and he lov'd me more than
I—

Till they would get him all apart, and
tell him

That where he was but wrong'd, he was
wrong'd.

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil
him too;

Now the spoilt child sways both. Take
heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl
no more;

Sale not with Tostig in any violence.

Fast thou is always guilty of the
violence.

Queen. Give till we find my man. I
leave thee, brother.

Harold. Nay, my good sister—
[*Enter Queen, Harold, Gurth, and
Leofwin.*]

Albanth. Gurth, son of Iorn,

What thinkest thou this means?

[*Albanth looks on.*]

Gurth. War, my dear lady,

War, waste, plague, famine, all malign-
ties.

Albanth. It means the fall of Tostig
from his position.

Queen. That were but small a matter
for a crown!

Albanth. It means the lifting of the
house of Alagar.

Gurth. The small a matter would
not show for that!

Albanth. Not small for thee, if thou
wert wiser.

Queen. Thy heart!

Albanth. As wiser I can give
thee, man;

This Tostig is, as thou art, a youth,
Stir up the people, and drive;

Gamel. And thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as thou canst bear.

Gamel. I can bear all,
And not be giddy.

Aldwyth. No more now : to-morrow.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.
SUNSET.

Edith. Mad for thy mate, passionate
nightingale . . .

I love thee for it—ay, but stay a moment ;

He can but stay a moment : he is going.

I fain would hear him coming ! . . . near
me . . . near,

Somewhere—To draw him nearer with a
charm

Like thine to thine.

(*Singing.*)

Love is come with a song and a smile,

Welcome Love with a smile and a song :

Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay? They call him
away :

Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong ;

Love will stay for a whole life long.

Enter HAROLD.

Harold. The nightingales at Havering-
in-the-bower

Sang out their loves so loud, that
Edward's prayers

Were deafen'd, and he pray'd them dumb,
and thus

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightingale !

[*Kissing her.*]

Edith. Thou art my music ! Would
their wings were mine

To follow thee to Flanders ! Must thou
go ?

Harold. Not must, but will. It is
but for one moon.

Edith. Leaving so many foes in
Edward's hall

To league against thy weal. The Lady
Aldwyth

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd
on thee,

She stammer'd in her hate ; I am sure
she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

Harold. Well, I have given her
cause—

I fear no woman.

Edith. Hate not one who felt

Some pity for thy hater ! I am sure

Her morning wanted sunlight, she so
praised

The convent and lone life—within the
pale—

Beyond the passion. Nay—she held with
Edward,

At least methought she held with holy
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

Harold. A lesson worth
Finger and thumb—thus (*snaps his
fingers*). And my answer to it—

See here—an interwoven H and E !

Take thou this ring ; I will demand his
ward

From Edward when I come again. Ay,
would she ?

She to shut up my blossom in the dark !

Thou art *my* nun, thy cloister in mine
arms.

Edith (*taking the ring*). Yea, but
Earl Tostig—

Harold. That's a truer fear !

For if the North take fire, I should be back ;
I shall be, soon enough.

Edith. Ay, but last night
An evil dream that ever came and went—

Harold. A gnat that vex't thy pillow
Had I been by

I would have spoil'd his horn. My god,
what was it?

Edith. Oh! that thou wert not going!
For so methought it was our marriage-
morn,

And while we stood together, a dead man
Rose from behind the altar, tore away
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal veil;
And then I turn'd, and saw the church
all fill'd

With dead men upright from their graves,
and all

The dead men made at thee to murder
thee,

But thou didst back thyself against a
pillar,

And strike among them with thy battle-
axe—

There, what a dream!

Harold. Well, well—a dream—
no more!

Edith. Did not Heaven speak to men
in dreams of old?

Harold. Ay—well—of old. I tell
thee what, my child;

Thou hast misread this merry dream of
thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood

For smooth stone columns of the sanc-
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the
battle-axe

Was out of place; it should have been
the bow.—

Come, thou shalt dream no more such
dreams; I swear it.

By mine own eyes—and these two saph-
ires—these

Twin rubies, that are amulets against all
The kisses of all kind of womankind

In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me back
To tumble at thy feet.

That would but damn me,
Rather than make me vain. Tho' my ring
roll

Such things, discovered, put the living
back

Which guards the land.

Harold. Except it be a soft one,
And unpressur'd to the fall, Mine
amulet . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to
shut in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and
thou shalt see

My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of
light,

And hear my peregrine and her bells in
heaven;

And other bells on earth, which yet are
heaven's;

Guess what they be.

Edith. He cannot guess which thine
Farewell, my king.

Harold. Not yet, but I'll answer you
[Exit]

Enter ALDWYTH from the back.

Aldwyth. The keel that charms them
op'd into sleep,

Will hold none waking. Hark, how
I could love him

Mere, venfold, than take his fall with restlessness,
Griffyth I hated; why not love the son

Of England? Griffyth when I saw him
lee,

Clam'd like a dog, but not a man, All
the blood

That should have sety pal'd the Griffyth,
that

For his pursuer. I love him or think I
love him.

If he were King of England, I his queen,
I might be sure of li. Nay, I do love
him.—

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the
king

Should yield his ward to Harold's will.
What harm?

She hath but blood enough to live, not
love.—

When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I
play

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn upon
him?

Chime in with all? 'O thou more saint
than king!'

And that were true enough. 'O blessed
relics!'

'O Holy Peter!' If he found me thus,
Harold might hate me; he is broad and
honest,

Breathing an easy gladness . . . not
like Aldwyth . . .

For which I strangely love him. Should
not England

Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds that
part

The sons of Godwin from the sons of
Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble
Aldwyth!

Let all thy people bless thee!

Our wild Tostig,

Edward hath made him Earl: he would
be king:

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt the
bone.—

I trust he may do well, this Gamel, whom
I play upon, that he may play the note

Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and
Harold

Hear the king's music, all alone with him,
Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it.—

Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake

Of England's wholeness—so—to shake
the North

With earthquake and disruption—some
division—

Then fling mine own fair person in the gap
A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,

A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of
both

The houses on mine head—then a fair life
And bless the Queen of England.

Morcar (coming from the thicket). Art
thou assured

By this, that Harold loves but Edith?
Aldwyth. Morcar!

Why creepst thou like a timorous beast
of prey

Out of the bush by night?

Morcar. I follow'd thee.

Aldwyth. Follow my lead, and I will
make thee earl.

Morcar. What lead then?

Aldwyth. Thou shalt flash it secretly
Among the good Northumbrian folk,

that I—

That Harold loves me—yea, and presently

That I and Harold are betroth'd—and
last—

Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho'
I would not

That it should come to that.

Morcar. I will both flash

And thunder for thee.

Aldwyth. I said 'secretly;'

It is the flash that murders, the poor
thunder

Never harm'd head.

Morcar. But thunder may bring down
That which the flash hath stricken.

Aldwyth. Down with Tostig!

That first of all.—And when doth Harold
go?

Morcar. To-morrow—first to Bosham,
then to Flanders.

Aldwyth. Not to come back till
Tostig shall have shown

And render'd with his people's blood the
teeth
That shall be broken by us—you, and
thou
Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and
dream thyself
Their chosen Earl. [Exit Aldwyth.
Mor. Earl first, and after that
Whoknows I may not dream myself their
king!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SEASHORE. PONTIEU.
NIGHT.

HAROLD and his Men, *separated*.

Harold. Friends, in that last inhospitable
plunge
Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours
are whole;

I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into
My old fast friend the shore, and clinging
thus

Felt the remorseless outlaught of the
deep

Had like a great strong fellow at my legs,
And then I rose and ran. The blast that
came

So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—

Fit thou the comet and this blast to-
gether—

Harold. Put thou thyself and mother-
wit together.

Be not a fool!

[Enter Fishermen with torches, HAROLD
going up to one of them, ROUF.]

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp!
Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy lying
lights

Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of
thine!

Rouf. Ay, but thou hast not betray'd the
black herring-pond behind thee. We be
fishermen; I come to—after my job.

Harold. To drag us into their
fishermen's net?

Who, while ye fish for men with your
false fins,

Let the great Devil fish for your consciences.

Rouf. Nay then, we be like the blessed
Apostles; they were fishers of men, Father
Jenny says.

Harold. I had fain that the fish had
swallowed me,

Like Jonah, than have known there were
such devils.

What's to be done?

[To his Men—*part apart with them:*

Fisherman. Rolf, what fish did swallow
Jonah?

Rouf. A whale!

Fisherman. Then a whale to a whale
we have swallowed the King of England.
I saw him over there. I catch thee, Rolf,
when I was down in the water, she was
down with the hunger, and thou didst
stare by her and give her thy crabs, and
set her up again, ill now, by the good
Saints, she's as useful as soon.

Rouf. And I'll give her my crabs again
when thou art down again.

Fisherman. I thank thee, Rolf. How
dost thou come? Goy; he be hard at hand.
Tell him what hath crept into our arms,
and he will let thee go freely or he will
wrestle thee outlander's passion out of
him—and why not? for what right had
he to get himself wadded in another
man's land?

Rouf. That art the famous-horridous
Christian-charitable of all fish-ponds.
Share and share alike! [Exit.

Harold [to Fisherman). Follow, dost
thou catch crabs?

Fisherman. As few as I may in a wind, and less than I would in a calm.
Ay!

Harold. I have a mind that thou shalt catch no more.

Fisherman. How?

Harold. I have a mind to brain thee with mine axe.

Fisherman. Ay, do, do, and our great Count-crab will make his nippers meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look, he's here! He'll speak for himself! Hold thine own, if thou canst!

Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTIEU.

Harold. Guy, Count of Pontieu!

Guy. Harold, Earl of Wessex!

Harold. Thy villains with their lying lights have wreck'd us!

Guy. Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

Harold. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a bush,
And leave them for a year, and coming back
Find them again.

Guy. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom!

Harold. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex—if I caught them, they should hang

Clifi-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-mew
Winging their only wail!

Guy. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed of
God;—

What hinders me to hold with mine own
men?

Leonora. The Christian manhood of
the man who reigns!

Guy. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our
oubliettes

Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him
hence! [*To one of his Attendants.*]
Fly thou to William; tell him we have
Harold.

SCENE II.—BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.

William. We hold our Saxon wood-
cock in the springe,
But he begins to flutter. As I think
He was thine host in England when I
went
To visit Edward.

Malet. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher
fashions,
I found him all a noble host should be.

William. Thou art his friend: thou
know'st my claim on England
Thro' Edward's promise: we have him in
the toils.

And it were well, if thou shouldst let him
feel,
How dense a fold of danger nets him
round,
So that he bristle himself against my
will.

Malet. What would I do, my lord, if
I were you?

William. What wouldst thou do?

Malet. My lord, he is thy guest.

William. Nay, by the splendour of
God, no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for the
fate

Which hunted *him* when that un-Saxon
blast,

And bolts of thunder moulded in high
heaven

To serve the Norman purpose, drave and
crack'd

His boat on Ponthieu beach; where our
friend Guy

Had wrung his ransom from him by the
rack,

But that I step'd between and purchased
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy

To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where he
sits

My ransom'd prisoner.

Malet. Well, if not with gold,

With golden deeds and iron strokes that
brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier close
Than else had been, he paid his ransom

back.

William. So that henceforth they are
not like to league

With Harold against me.

Malet. A marvel, how

He from the liquid sands of Coesnon

Hale't thy shoreswallow'd, armour'd
Normans up

To fight for thee again!

William. Perchance against

Their savor, save thou save him from
himself.

Malet. But I should let him loose
again, my lord.

William. Simple! let fly the bird
within the hand,

To catch the bird again within the bush!
No.

Smooth thou my way, before he clash with
me;

I want his voice in England for the crown,
I want thy voice with him to bring him
round;

And being brave he must be subtly cow'd,
And being truthful wrought upon to
swear

Vows that he dare not break. England
our own

Thine Harold's help, he shall be my dear
friend

As well as thine, and thine thyself shall
have

Laurel-boughs there of land and territory.

Malet. I know thy purpose; he and
Wulfstan never

Have met, except in public; shall they
meet

In private? I have often talk'd with
Wulfstan,

And stuff'd the boy with fears that thou
may act

On Harold when they meet.

William. Then let them meet!

Malet. I can but love this noble,
honest Harold.

William. Love him! why not? thine
is a loving office,

I have commission'd thee to save the
man:

Help the good ship, showing the sunken
rock,

Or he is wrecks for ever.

Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.

William Rufus. Father.

William. Well, boy,

William Rufus. They have taken
away the boy thou gavest me.

The Norman knight.

William. Why, boy?

William Rufus. Because I broke
The horse's leg—it was none used to
break;

I like to have my toys, and break them too.

William. Well, thou shalt have
another Norman knight!

William Rufus. And may I lead his
squire?

William. Yea,—get thee gone!

William Rufus. I'll tell them I have
had my way with thee. *[Exit.*

Maltr. I never knew thee check thy will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

William. Who shall be kings of England. I am heir Of England by the promise of her king.

Malet. But there the great Assembly choose their king, The choice of England is the voice of England.

William. I will be king of England by the laws, The choice, and voice of England.

Malet. Can that be?

William. The voice of any people is the sword That guards them, or the sword that beats them down.

Here comes the would-be what I will be . . . kinglike . . .

Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our meshes break, More kinglike he than like to prove a king.

Enter HAROLD, musing, with his eyes on the ground.)

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of me. Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair day? They are of the best, strong-wing'd against the wind.

Harold (looking up suddenly, having caught but the last word). Which way does it blow?

William. Blowing for England, ha? Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy quarters here.

The winds so cross and jostle among these towers.

Harold. Count of the Normans, thou hast ransom'd us, Maintain'd, and entertain'd us royally!

William. And thou for us hast fought as loyally,

Which binds us friendship-fast for ever!

Harold. Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy By too much pressure on it, I would fain, Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth home with us,

Be home again with Wulfnoth.

William. Stay—as yet

Thou hast but seen how Norman hands can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce touch'd or tasted

The splendours of our Court.

Harold. I am in no mood:

I should be as the shadow of a cloud Crossing your light.

William. Nay, rest a week or two, And we will fill thee full of Norman sun, And send thee back among thine island mists

With laughter.

Harold. Count, I thank thee, but had rather

Breathe the free wind from off our Saxon downs,

Tho' charged with all the wet of all the west.

William. Why if thou wilt, so let it be—thou shalt.

That were a graceless hospitality To chain the free guest to the banquet-board;

To-morrow we will ride with thee to Harfleur,

And see thee shipt, and pray in thy behalf For happier homeward winds than that which crack'd

Thy bark at Ponthieu, - yet to us, in faith, A happy one—whereby we came to know Thy valour and thy value, noble earl.

Ay, and perchance a happy one for thee, Provided—I will go with thee to-morrow—

Nay—but there be conditions, easy ones,
So thou, fair friend, wilt take them easily.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord, there is a post from
over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*]

William. Come, Mabel, let us hear!

[*Enter Count William and Mabel.*]

Harold. Conditions? What conditions?
pay him back

His ransom? 'easy'—that were easy—
nay—

No money-lover he! What said the
King?

'I pray you do not go to Normandy.'

And fate hath blown me hither, bound
me too

With bitter obligation to the Count—

Have I not fought it out? What did he
mean?

There lodged a gleaming grimness in his
eyes,

Gave his shorn smile the lie. The walls
oppress me,

And yon huge keep that hinders half the
heaven.

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-arms
follows him.*]

Harold [*to the Man-at-arms*]. I need
thee not. Why dost thou follow me?

Man-at-arms. I have the Count's
commands to follow thee.

Harold. What then? Am I in danger
in this court?

Man-at-arms. I cannot tell. I have
the Count's commands.

Harold. Stand out of earshot then,
and keep me still

In eyeshot.

Man-at-arms. Yea, lord Harold.

[*Retires.*]

Mabel.

And arm'd with
Ever-long watch beside my chamber door,
And if I walk within the household wood,
There you grow'd, your eyes you gilds beheld!

Enter MABEL.

Why am I follow'd, bound, barr'd,
with'd?

See yonder!

[*Pointing to the Man-at-arms.*]

Mabel. 'To the good Count's cause' for
thee!

The Normans love thee not, nor thou the
Normans,

Or—so they deem,

Harold. But wherefore is the wind,
Which way soever the vane-*arrow* swings,
Not ever fair for England? Why hast
now

He said [*thou hast* in thee] that I must
not hence

Save on conditions.

Mabel. So in truth he said.

Mabel. Mabel, thy *uncle* was an
Englishman;

There somewhere hangs an English pulchre
in thee!

Mabel. Well—for my mother's sake
I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

Harold. Speak for thy mother's sake,
and tell me true.

Mabel. Then for my mother's sake,
and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,

Obey the Count's conditions, my good
friend.

Harold. How, Mabel, if they be not
harmful to?

Mabel. seem to obey thee.

Harold. Better die than lie!

Mabel. Cannot therefore what thou thou
wilt have thy conscience

White as a maiden's hand, or whether
England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

Harold. News from England?

Malet. Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd
up the Thanes

Against thy brother Tostig's governance;
And all the North of Humber is one storm.

Harold. I should be there, Malet, I
should be there!

Malet. And Tostig in his own hall on
suspicion

Hath masser'd the Thane that was his
guest,

Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be more
As villainously slain.

Harold. The wolf! the beast!

Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More?
What more?

What do they say? did Edward know of
this?

Malet. They say, his wife was knowing
and abetting.

Harold. They say, his wife!—To
marry and have no husband

Makes the wife fool. My God, I should
be there.

I'll hack my way to the sea.

Malet. Thou canst not, Harold;

Our Duke is all between thee and the sea,
Our Duke is all about thee like a God;
All passes block'd. Obey him, speak
him fair,

For he is only debonair to those
That follow where he leads, but stark as
death

To those that cross him.—Look thou,
here is Wulfnoth!

I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;
How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad
for home! [*Exit Malet.*]

Harold. (*mourning.*) Go not to
Normandy—go not to Normandy!

(*Enter WULFNOTH.*)

Poor brother! still a hostage!

Wulfnoth. Yea, and I

Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more
Make blush the maiden-white of our tall
cliffs,

Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself and
hover

Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter—never—save
indeed

Thou canst make yield this iron-mooded
Duke

To let me go.

Harold. Why, brother, so he will;
But on conditions. Canst thou guess at
them?

Wulfnoth. Draw nearer,—I was in
the corridor,

I saw him coming with his brother Odo
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Harold. They did thee wrong who
made thee hostage; thou

Wast ever fearful.

Wulfnoth. And he spoke—I
heard him—

'This Harold is not of the royal blood,
Can have no right to the crown,' and Odo
said,

'Thine is the right, for thine the might;
he is here,

And yonder is thy keep.'

Harold. No, Wulfnoth, no.

Wulfnoth. And William laugh'd and
swore that might was right,

Far as he knew in this poor world of
ours—

'Marry, the Saints must go along with us,
And, brother, we will find a way,' said
he—

Yea, yea, he would be king of England,

Harold. Never!

Wulfnoth. Yea, but thou must not
this way answer *him*.

Harold. Is it not better still to speak
the truth?

Wulfnoth. Not here, or thou wilt
never hence nor I:

Not in the racing toward this golden goal
He turns not right or left, but tramples flat
Whichever thwarts him; hast thou never
heard?

His savagery at Alençon,—the town
Hang out raw hides along their walls, and
cried

'Work for the tanner.'

Harold. That had anger'd me
Had I been William.

Wulfnoth. Nay, but he had prisoners,
He tore their eyes out, sliced their hands
away,

And flung them streaming o'er the battle-
ments

Upon the heads of those who walk'd
within—

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine own
sake.

Harold. Your Wolsman says, 'The
Truth against the World.'

Much more the truth against myself.

Wulfnoth. Thyself?
But for my sake, oh brother! oh! for
my sake!

Harold. Poor Wulfnoth! do they not
entreat thee well?

Wulfnoth. I see the blackness of my
dungeon loom

Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their banquet
clank

The shackles that will bind me to the
wall.

Harold. Too fearful still!

Wulfnoth. Oh no, no—speak
him fair!

Call it thy fortune, I will not to die.

Harold. I do not counsel thee to lie.

The man that lieth to kill a man may sin;
May, sorry, play with none.

Harold. Would'st say the man
Not with the thy self, tanner, would I
lie.

Wulfnoth. Then for those falls?

Harold. Those thou prick'st me
deep.

Wulfnoth. And for the Mother Eng-
land?

Harold. Deeper still.

Wulfnoth. And deeper still the deep-
down oubliette,

Down thirty feet below the smiling day—
In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon
thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set.

And the lark sings, the sweet ones come
and go,

And men are at their work, at their
hills,

And who shall love and have forgotten
thee;

And thou art upright in thy living grave,
Where there is barely room to shift thy
side.

And all these English hath forgotten thee?
And for my sake, poor Wulfnoth, King

Will all his Normans count him con-
spire.

Y' count his old hands, and hath forgotten
thee.

Harold. Thou art of my blood, and
so methinks my boy.

Thy heart, when thou beyond count'st,
I love!

Wulfnoth. And thou art my King,
with thy blood.

As gained here, if his Northmen invasion
And lost him from France: I have heard
the Norman

Count upon this confusion—may he not
make

A league with William, so to bring him
back?

Harold. That lies within the shadow
of the chance.

Wulfnoth. And like a river in flood
thro' a burst dam

Descends the ruthless Norman—our good
King

Kneels mumbling some old bone—our
helpless folk

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own
blood—

Harold. Wailing! not warring? Boy,
thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.

Wulfnoth. Then our modest women—
I know the Norman license—thine own
Edith—

Harold. No more! I will not hear
thee—William comes.

Wulfnoth. I dare not well be seen in
talk with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake with
thee.

[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*]

Enter WILLIAM, MALET, and Officer.

Officer. We have the man that rail'd
against thy birth.

William. Tear out his tongue.

Officer. He shall not rail again.
He said that he should see confusion fall
on thee and on thine house.

William. Tear out his eyes,
And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.

[*Exit Officer.*]

William. Look not amazed, fair earl!
Better leave undone
Than do by halves—tongueless and eye-
less, prison'd—

Harold. Better methinks have slain
the man at once!

William. We have respect for man's
immortal soul,

We seldom take man's life, except in
war;

It frights the traitor more to maim and
blind.

Harold. In mine own land I should
have scorn'd the man,

Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.

William. And let him go? To slander
thee again!

Yet in thine own land in thy father's day
They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred
—ay,

Some said it was thy father's deed.

Harold. They lied.

William. But thou and he—whom art
thy word, for thou

Art known a speaker of the truth, I free
From this foul charge—

Harold. Nay, nay, he freed himself
By oath and compurgation from the
charge.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd
him of it.

William. But thou and he drove our
good Normans out

From England, and this rankles in us yet.
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with
life.

Harold. Archbishop Robert! Robert
the Archbishop!

Robert of Jumiéges, he that—

Malet. Quiet! quiet!

Harold. Count! if there sat within
thy Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd
All offices, all bishopricks with English—
We could not move from Dover to the
Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishopricks—I say

Ye would applaud that Norman who
should drive

The stranger to the fiends!

William. Why, that is reason!
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise withal!
Ay, ay, but many among our Norman
lords

Hate thee for this, and press upon me—
saying

God and the sea have given thee to our
hands—

To plunge thee inulfie-long prison here:—
Yet I look out against them, as I may,
Yea—would hold out, yet that they
should never!

For thou hast done the battle in my cause;
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

Harold. I am doubly bound to thee
. . . if this be so.

William. And I would bind thee
more, and would myself

Be bounden to thee more.

Harold. Then let me hence
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

William. So we will.
We hear he hath not long to live.

Harold. It may be.

William. Why then the heir of
England, who is he?

Harold. The Atheling is nearest to
the throne.

William. But sickly, slight, half-
witted and a child,

Will England have him king?

Harold. It may be, no.

William. And hath King Edward not
pronounced his heir?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. When he was here in
Normandy,

He loved us and we him, because we
found him

A Norman of the Normans.

Harold. Should we.

William. A gentle, gracious, pure and
manly man!

And grateful to the hand that shielded
him,

He promised that if you be working
in England, he would give five hundred
years

To me as his successor. Knowest thou
this?

Harold. I learn it now.

William. Thou knowest I am his
cousin,

And that my wife descends from Alfred?

Harold. Ay.

William. Who hath a better claim
then to the crown

So that ye will not crown the Atheling?

Harold. None that I know . . . if
that but hung upon

King Edward's will.

William. Will thou uphold my claim?

Malet (aside to Harold). Be careful of
thine answer, my good friend.

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Oh!
Harold, for my sake eat for thine
own!

Harold. Ay . . . if the king have
not revoked his promise.

William. But hath he done it then?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. Good, good, and thou wilt
help me to the crown?

Harold. Ay . . . if the Witan will
consent to this.

William. Thou art the mightiest soldier
in England, now.

Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I
know it?

Edgfred (just as Harold). Oh!

Harold, if thou breakest thou wilt
ay.

Harold. Ay, it—

Malet (aside to Harold). Thine 'ifs' will scar thine eyes out—ay.

William. I ask thee, wilt thou help me to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl of Earls,
Foremost in England and in Normandy;
Thou shalt be verily king—all but the name—

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;
And thou be my vice-king in England.
Speak.

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Ay, brother—for the sake of England—ay.

Harold. My lord—

Malet (aside to Harold). Take heed now.

Harold. Ay.

William. I am content,
For thou art truthful, and thy word thy bond.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to Harfleur. [*Exit William.*]

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one life with thee,
And even as I should bless thee saving mine,

I thank thee now for having saved thyself.
[*Exit Malet.*]

Harold. For having lost myself to save myself,

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like a lad

That dreads the pendent scourge, said 'ay' for 'no'!

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an oath

Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word
As break mine oath? He call'd my word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my word—

The crime be on his head—not bounden—no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, discovering in an inner hall* COUNT WILLIAM *in his state robes, seated upon his throne, between two Bishops, ODO OF BAYEUX being one: in the centre of the hall an ark covered with cloth of gold; and on either side of it the Norman barons.*]

Enter a JAILOR before William's throne.

William (to Jailor). Knave, hast thou let thy prisoner scape?

Jailor. Sir Count, He had but one foot, he must have hopt away,

Yea, some familiar spirit must have help'd him.

William. Woe knave to thy familiar and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*]
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait my will. [*The Jailor stands aside.*]

William (to Harold). Hast thou such trustless jailors in thy North?

Harold. We have few prisoners in mine earldom there,
So less chance for false keepers.

William. We have heard Of thy just, mild, and equal governance;
Honour to thee! thou art perfect in all honour!

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it now

Before our gather'd Norman baronage,
For they will not believe thee—as I believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands by the ark.*]

Let all men here bear witness of our
bond!

[*Reckons to Harold, with a bow.*]

Enter MALET behind him.

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall!
Behold the jewel of St. Pancratus

Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this—

Harold. What should I swear? Why
should I swear on this?

William (savagely). Swear thou to
help me to the crown of England.

Malet (whispering Harold). My friend,
thou hast gone too far to palter
now.

Wulfnoth (whispering Harold). Swear
thou to-day, to-morrow is thine
own.

Harold. I swear to help thee to the
crown of England . . .

According as King Edward promises.

William. Thou must swear absolutely,
noble Earl.

Malet (whispering). Delay is death to
thee, ruin to England.

Wulfnoth (whispering). Swear, dear-
est brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (putting his hand on the jewel).
I swear to help thee to the crown
of England.

William. Thanks, truthful Earl; I
did not doubt thy word,

But that my barons might believe thy word,
And that the Holy Saints of Normandy
When thou art home in England, with
thine own,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy
word,

I made thee swear—swear when by whom
he hath sworn.

[*The two Bishops kneel, and raise
divots of gold. The walls and
base of Saints are seen lying in the
ark.*]

The holy bones of all the Brethren!

From all the hollow churches in Nor-
mandy!

Harold. Horrible! [*They lay the divots
fall down.*]

William. Ay, for thou hast sworn an
oath

Which, if not kept, would make the hard
earth rive

To the very Devil's horns, the bright sky
cleave

To the very feet of God, and send his
hosts

Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of
plague

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants,
dash

The torch of war among your standing
corn,

Dabble your hearths with your own
blood—*(trough)*!

Thou wilt not brook—! I, the Count—
the King—

Thy friend—am grateful for thine *(kiss)*—
(kiss).

Not smiling friendly like a companion,
now,

But coldly as a hind-groom to his room.

For I shall roll according to your
law,

And make your ever-jarring *(Earldome)*—
(move)

To minister to order—Anglo, Jute,

Dane, Saxon, Norman, bids to hold a
throne

Out-awing her of France . . . The
wind is this

The English law . . . Tonight we will
be merry.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to
Harfleur.

[*Exeunt William and all the Norman
Barons, &c.*]

Harold. To-night we will be merry—
and to-morrow—

Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates
that most—

William the tanner's bastard! Would
he heard me!

O God, that I were in some wide, waste
field

With nothing but my battle-axe and him
To spatter his brains! Why let earth
rive, gulf in

These cursed Normans—yea and mine
own self.

Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that
I may say

Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with
William

Ye are not noble.' How their pointed
fingers

Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold,
son

Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch
mine arms,

My limbs—they are not mine—they are
a liar's—

I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—
Stigand shall give me absolution for it—
Did the chest move? did it move? I am
utter craven!

O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou
hast betray'd me!

Wulfnoth. Forgive me, brother, I
will live here and die.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits thee
at the banquet.

Harold. Where they eat dead men's
flesh, and drink their blood.

Page. My lord—

Harold. I know your Norman cookery
is so spiced
It masks all this.

Page. My lord! thou art white
as death.

Harold. With looking on the dead,
Am I so white?

Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence,
I follow. *[Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE KING'S PALACE. LONDON.

KING EDWARD *dying on a couch, and by
him standing the QUEEN, HAROLD,
ARCHBISHOP STIGAND, GURTH,
LEOFWIN, ARCHBISHOP ALDRED,
ALDWYTH, and EDITH.*

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there?
If this be death,

Then our great Council wait to crown
thee King—

Come hither, I have a power;

[To Harold.

They call me near, for I am close to thee
And England—I, old shrivel'd Stigand,
I,

Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead
tree,

I have a power!

See here this little key about my neck!

There lies a treasure buried down in Ely:
If e'er the Norman grow too hard for
thee,

Ask me for this at thy most need, son
Harold,

At thy most need—not sooner.

Harold. So I will.

Stigand. Red gold—a hundred purses
—yea, and more!

If thou canst make a wholesome use of
these

To chink against the Norman, I do
believe

My old crook'd ending would had out two
young wings

To fly to heaven straight with.

Harold. Thank thee, father !
Thou art English, Edward too is English
now,

He hath clean repented of his Nor-
manism.

Stigand. Ay, as the libertine repents
who cannot

Make done undone, when thro' his dying
sense

Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have
built their castles here :

Our priories are Norman ; the Norman
adder

Hath bitten us ; we are poison'd : our
dear England

Is demi-Norman. He !—

[*Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.*]

Harold. I would I were
As holy and as passionless as he !

That I might rest as calmly ! Look at
him—

The rosy face, and long down-silvering
beard,

The brows unshakled as a summer
mere.—

Stigand. A summer mere with sudden
wreckful gusts

From a side-gorge. Passionless ? How
he flamed

When Tostig's anger'd earldom flang
him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria
To one black ash, but that thy patriot

passion
Selling with our great Council against

Tostig,
Out-passion'd his ! Holy ? ay, ay, far-

sooth,
A conscience for his own soul, not his

realm ;

A twilight conscience lighted, shew'd a
chink ;

Thine by the sun ; nay, by some not to be,
When all the world built found to wash
the truth,

And lying were commoner by that state
Which was the corruption.

Harold. That was my God speed !
Stigand. Come, Harold, clear the
cloud off !

Harold. Can I, father ?
Our Tostig parted coming out and
England ;

Our sister hates us for his banishment ;
He hath gone to kinde Norway against
England,

And Wulfnoth is alone in Noomania,
For when I rode with William down to
Harfleur,

²Wulfnoth is dead,² he said : 'he cannot
follow ;'

Then with that friendly-fiendly smile of
his,

'We have meant to free him, we took a
little longer

Remain a hostage for the loyalty
Of Godwin's house.' As for our brother

Wulfnoth
I had no period with words and sealed
truth

Have sinn'd against it all my years.
Stigand. Good father,

If all the words that ever passed had
power'd,

Of all the lies that ever man have told,
This is the greatest lie.

Harold. May it be so !
I think it so, I think I can't be so.

To think it can be otherwise lies me.
Stigand. Yet, yet, I have doubted

these, but thou have not,
Because I had my conscience pulling

From one whom they deign'd not
T. F.

Harold. No, Stigand, no !

Stigand. Is naked truth actable in true life ?

I have heard a saying of thy father Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true, Men would but take him for the craftier liar.

Leofwin. Be men less delicate than the Devil himself ?

I thought that naked Truth would shame the Devil

The Devil is so modest.

Gurth. He never said it !

Leofwin. Be thou not stupid-honest, brother Gurth !

Harold. Better to be a liar's dog, and hold

My master honest, than believe that lying And ruling men are fatal twins that cannot

Move one without the other. Edward wakes !—

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

Edward. The green tree !

Then a great Angel past along the highest Crying 'the doom of England,' and at once

He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft the tree

From off the bearing trunk, and hur'd it from him

Three fields away, and then he dash'd and drench'd,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with human blood,

And brought the sunder'd tree again, and set it

Straight on the trunk, that thus baptized in blood

Grew ever high and higher, beyond my seeing,

And shot out sidelong boughs across the deep

That dropt themselves, and rooted in far isles

Beyond my seeing : and the great Angel rose

And past again along the highest crying 'The doom of England !'—Tostig, raise my head ! [*Falls back senseless.*

Harold (raising him). Let Harold serve for Tostig !

Queen. Harold served Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tostig ! Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid it low !

The sickness of our saintly king, for whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears fall, I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd him.

Harold. Nay—but the council, and the king himself,

Queen. Thou hatest him, hatest him.

Harold (coldly). Ay—Stigand, unriddle

This vision, canst thou ?

Stigand. Dotage !

Edward (starting up). It is finish'd. I have built the Lord a house—the Lord hath dwelt

In darkness. I have built the Lord a house—

Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden cherubim

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to wall—

I have built the Lord a house—sing, Asaph ! clash

The cymbal, Heman ! blow the trumpet, priest !

Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo ! my two pillars,

Jaclin and Boaz!—

[*Seeing Harold and Gurth.*]

Harold, Gurth, —where am I?

Where is the charter of our Westminster?

Stigand. It lies beside thee, king,
upon thy bed.

Edward. Sign, sign at once—take,
sign it, Stigand, Alfred!

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth, and
Leafwin,

Sign it, my queen!

Alf. We have sign'd it.

Edward. It is finish'd!

The kingliest Abbey in all Christian
lands,

The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built

To Holy Peter in our English isle!

Let me be buried there, and all our
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy men

That shall be born hereafter. It is
finish'd!

Hast thou had absolution for thine oath?

[*To Harold.*]

Harold. Stigand hath given me absolu-
tion for it.

Edward. Stigand is not canonical
enough

To save thee from the wrath of Norman
Saints.

Stigand. Norman enough! Be there
no Saints of England

To help us from their brethren yonder?

Edward. Prelate,

The Saints are one, but those of Nor-
manland

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of
Aldred. [*To Harold.*]

Aldred. It shall be granted him, my
king; for he

Who vows a vow to strangle his own
mother

Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking it.

Edward. O friends, I shall ne'er over-
live the day.

Stigand. Why then the throne is
empty. Who inherits?

Forther we be not bound by the king's words
In making of a king, yet the king's words
Is much toward his making. Who
inherits?

Edgar the Atheling?

Edward. No, no, but Harold.

I love him: he hath served me; none
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the cause is
on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed
bones;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

Harold. Not mean

To make our England Norman.

Edward. There spake Godwin,

Who hated all the Normans; but their
Saints

Have heard thee, Harold.

Edith. Oh! my lord, my king!

He knew not whom he swore by.

Edward. Yes, I know

He know not, but those honestly men
have heard,

That came to on him; wilt thou bring
another,

Edith, upon his head?

Edith. No, no, but I.

Edward. Why then, thou must but
wed him.

Harold. Wherefore, wherefore?

Edward. O son, when thou didst tell
me of thine oath,

I borrow'd for my wedding promise given
To you his love. I did not dream thou

I should be king. — My son, the Saints
are virgins;

They love the white rose of virginity,

The cold, white lily blowing in her cell:

I have been myself a virgin ; and I swear
To consecrate my virgin here to heaven—
The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,
A life of life-long prayer against the curse
That lies on thee and England.

Harold. No, no, no.

Edward. Treble denial of the tongue
of flesh,

Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt
have

To wail for it like Peter. O my son !
Are all oaths to be broken then, all
promises

Made in our agony for help from heaven?
Son, there is one who loves thee : and a
wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable
In all obedience, as mine own hath
been :

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the Queen's head.*]

Queen. Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the rest,
My banish'd Tostig.

Edward. All the sweet Saints
bless him !

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he
comes !

And let him pass unscathed ; he loves
me, Harold !

Be kindly to the Normans left among us,
Who follow'd me for love ! and dear son,
swear

When thou art king, to see my solemn
vow

Accomplish'd.

Harold. Nay, dear lord, for I have
sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

Edward. Thou wilt not swear ?

Harold. I cannot.

Edward. Then on thee remains
the curse,

Harold, if thou embrace her : and on thee,
Edith, if thou abide it,—

[*The King swoons ; Edith falls and
kneels by the couch.*]

Stigand. He hath swoon'd !
Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

Harold. Look up ! look up !
Edith !

Aldred. Confuse her not ; she hath
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Aldwyth. O noble Harold,
I would thou couldst have sworn.

Harold. For thine own pleasure ?
Aldwyth. No, but to please our dying
king, and those

Who make thy good their own—all
England, Earl.

Aldred. I would thou couldst have
sworn. Our holy king
Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy
Church

To save thee from the curse.

Harold. Alas ! poor man,
His promise brought it on me.

Aldred. O good son!
That knowledge made him all the care-
fuller

To find a means whereby the curse might
glance

From thee and England.

Harold. Father, we so loved—

Aldred. The more the love, the
mightier is the prayer ;

The more the love, the more acceptable
The sacrifice of both your loves to heaven.
No sacrifice to heaven, no help from
heaven ;

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the king
Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and
seen

A shadowing horror; there are signs in
heaven—

Harold. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth!

Knewest thou Senlac hill?

Harold. I know all Sussex;

A good entrenchment for a perilous hour!

Aldred. Pray God that come not
suddenly! There is one

Who passing by that hill three nights ago—

He shook so that he scarce could out
with it—

Heard, heard—

Harold. The wind in his hair?

Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-
hymns,

And cries, and clashes, and the groans of
men;

And dreadful shadows strove upon the hill,

And dreadful lights crept up from out
the marsh—

Corpse-candles gliding over nameless
graves—

Harold. At Senlac?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edward (*starting*). Senlac! Sanguelac,
The Lake of Blood!

Stigand. This lightning before death
Plays on the word,—and Normanizes too!

Harold. Hush, father, hush!

Edward. Thou uncanonical fool,
Wilt thou play with the thunder? North
and South

Thunder together, showers of blood are
blown

Before a never ending blast, and hiss
Against the blaze they cannot quench—a
lake,

A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood
—for God

Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has
drawn the bow—

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the ocean the
arrow!

Edmund. It is the arrow of death in
his own hand—

And our great Conrard will to crown this
King.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,
crown'd King—and lost to me!

(*Singing.*)

Two young lovers in winter weather,

None to guide them,

Walk'd at night on the misty heathen;

Night, as black as a raven's feather;

Both were lost and found together,

None beside them.

This is the burden of it—lost and found

Together in the grand river Swale

A hundred years ago; and there's another,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

'I am beside thee.'

Lost, lost, we have lost the way;

'Love, I will guide thee.'

Whither, O whither? into the deep;

Where we two may be lost together;

And lost for ever? 'Oh! never,

oh! never;

That we be lost and be found to-

gether.'

Some think they lived with the pale
fantoms

By Holy Church: but who shall say?
the truth

Was lost in that fern North, where they
were lost,

Where all good things are lost, where
Tostig lies.

The good hearts of his people. It is
Harold !

(Enter HAROLD.)

Harold the King !

Harold. Call me not King, but
Harold.

Edith. Nay, thou art King !

Harold. Thine, thine, or King
or churl !

My girl, thou hast been weeping : turn
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and command
That kiss my due when subject, which
will make

My kingship kinglier to me than to reign
King of the world without it.

Edith. Ask me not,

Lest I should yield it, and the second
curse

Descend upon thine head, and thou be
only

King of the moment over England.

Harold. Edith,

Tho' somewhat less a king to my true self
Than ere they crown'd me one, for I have
lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine
oath,

Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not
thou

Our living passion for a dead man's dream ;
Stigand believed he knew not what he
spake.

Oh God ! I cannot help it, but at times
They seem to me too narrow, all the faiths
Of this grown world of ours, whose baby
eye

Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I
fear

This curse, and scorn it. But a little
light !—

And on it falls the shadow of the priest ;
Heaven yield us more ! for better,
Woden, all

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim
Walhalla,

Eternal war, than that the Saints at peace
The Holiest of our Holiest one should be
This William's fellow-tricksters ;—better
die

Than credit this, for death is death, or else
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in my
kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not.

Harold. Scared by the church—
'Love for a whole life long'

When was that sung ?

Edith. Here to the nightingales.

Harold. Their anthems of no church,
how sweet they are !

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to cross
Their billings ere they nest.

Edith. They are but of spring,
They fly the winter change—not so with
us—

No wings to come and go.

Harold. But wing'd souls flying
Beyond all change and in the eternal
distance

To settle on the Truth.

Edith. They are not so true,
They change their mates.

Harold. Do they ? I did not know it.

Edith. They say thou art to wed the
Lady Aldwyth.

Harold. They say, they say.

Edith. If this be politic,
And well for thee and England—and for
her—

Care not for me who love thee.

Gurth (*calling*). Harold, Harold!

Harold. The voice of Gurth! (*Enter GURTH.*) Good even, my good brother!

Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.

Edith. Good even, Gurth.

Gurth. Ill news hath come! Our hapless brother, Tostig—

He, and the giant King of Norway, Harold

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Orkney,

Are landed North of Humber, and in a field

So packt with carnage that the dykes and brooks

Were bridged and damm'd with dead, have overthrown

Morcar and Edwin.

Harold. Well then, we must fight.

How blows the wind?

Gurth. Against St. Valery And William.

Harold. Well then, we will to the North.

Gurth. Ay, but woe's news: thif William sent to Rome, Swearing thou swarest falsely by his Saints:

The Pope and that Archdeacon Hildebrand

His master, heard him, and have sent him back

A holy gonfanon, and a blessed hair Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy, Fritou, all Christendom is raised against thee;

He hath cursed thee, and all those who fight for thee,

And given thy realm of England to the bastard.

Harold. Ha! ha!

Edith. Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange and fearful in the gloom And shadowing of this double thunder-cloud

That hurs on England—laughter!

Harold. No, not strange! This was old human laughter at Old Rome: Before a Pope was born, when that whose reign'd

Call'd itself God.—A kindly rectoring Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The Good Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.

Gurth. They have taken York.

Harold. The Lord was God and came as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York taken?

Gurth. Yes, Tostig hath taken York!

Harold. To York thou, Edith. Hast thou been braver, I had better loved

All—but I love thee and thou me—and that

Remains beyond all clerics and all churches.

And that thou knowest.

Edith. Ay, but take back thy ring: It burns my hand—come to comfort me: I dare not wear it.

[*Offers Harold the ring, which he takes.*]

Harold. But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*]

Edith. The King hath cursed him, if he marry me;

The Pope hath cursed him, marry me no more!

God help me! I know nothing—some men pray

For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help but prayer.

A breath that fleets beyond this iron world, And touches Him that made . . .

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—IN NORTHUMBRIA.

ARCHBISHOP ALDRED, MORCAR, EDWIN,
and Forces. *Enter HAROLD. The
standard of the golden Dragon of Wes-
sex preceding him.*

Harold. What ! are thy people sullen
from defeat ?

Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the
Humber,
No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the
quick

Before the king—as having been so bruised
By Harold, king of Norway ; but our help
Is Harold, king of England. Pardon us,
thou !

Our silence is our reverence for the
king !

Harold. Earl of the Mercians ! if the
truth be gall,
Cram me not thou with honey, when our
good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth ! Aldwyth !

Harold. Why cry thy people on thy
sister's name ?

Morcar. She hath won upon our
people thro' her beauty,
And pleasantness among them.

Voices. Aldwyth, Aldwyth !

Harold. They shout as they would
have her for a queen.

Morcar. She hath followed with our
host, and suffer'd all.

Harold. What would ye, men ?

Voice. Our old Northumbrian
crown,

And kings of our own choosing.

Harold. Your old crown

Were little help without our Saxon carle
Against Hardrada.

Voice. Little ! we are Danes,
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our
own field.

Harold. They have been plotting here !
[*Aside.*]

Voice. He calls us little !

Harold. The kingdoms of this world
began with little,

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a hand
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou
mine,'

Then to the next, 'Thou also !' If the field
Cried out 'I am mine own ;' another hill
Or fort, or city, took it, and the first
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

Voice. Yet

Thou art but a West Saxon : we are Danes !

Harold. My mother is a Dane, and I
am English ;

There is a pleasant fable in old books,
Ye take a stick, and break it ; bind a score
All in one faggot, snap it over knee,
Ye cannot.

Voice. Hear King Harold ! he
says true !

Harold. Would ye be Norsemen ?

Voices. No !

Harold. Or Norman ?

Voices. No !

Harold. Snap not the faggot-band then.

Voice. That is true !

Voice. Ay, but thou art not kingly,
only grandson

To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

Harold. This old Wulfnoth
Would take me on his knees and tell me
tales

Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great
Who drove you Danes ; and yet he held
that Dane,

Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be all

Our England, for this new Lord, like my
father,

Who shook the Norman scoundrels off
the throne,

Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of
men,

Not made but born, like the great king
of all,

A light among the men.

Vivian. That is true!

Vivian. Ay, and I love him now, for
mine own father

Was great, and cobbled.

Vivian. Thou art Tostig's brother,
Who wastes the land.

Harold. This brother comes to save
Your land from waste; I saved it once
before.

For when your people banish'd Tostig
hence,

And Edward would have sent a host
against you,

Then I, who loved my brother, bad the
king

Who doted on him, sanction your decree
Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of
Mowbray,

To help the realm from scattering.

Vivian. King! thy brother,
If one may dare to speak the truth, was
wrong'd.

Wild was he, born so: but the plots
against him

Had madden'd tamer men.

Mowbray. Thou art one of those
Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-
house

And slew two hundred of his following,
And now, when Tostig hath come back
with power,

Are frighted back to Tostig.

Old Thane. Ugh! Plots and feuds!
This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye not

Be brethren?—Gannon will sit fast with
Alfred,

And Alfred loves King Harold. Then
you know!

This is my ninetieth birthday!

Harold. Old man, Harold
Hates nothing; not thy race. If our two
houses—

Be true dead brothers,

Edric. A holyth, Harold! A holyth!

Harold. A holy! Mowbray! A holy!
What do they mean?

Edric. So the good king would charge
to lend an ear

Not overscornful, we might chance—[*Exit*]
[*Chorus*—

To guess their meaning.

Mowbray. Thine own meaning, Harold!
Tostig will fight and, to lose all hands,
Mixing our bloods, the Queen's king
may win

Half-Godwin and half-Ælfgar, one to rule
All England beyond questioning, beyond
quarrel.

Harold. What would this mean here
among the people?

Edric. Who knows what now is said
among the people?

A goodly power at home.

Harold. The Queen of Wilton?
Why, Mowbray, it is all but they in her
Tribunals; I dare trust her hands.

Edric. Now!

For I can swear to that, but cannot swear
That these will follow thee against the
Normans.

If thou deny them this.

Edric. Mowbray and Edric,
When will ye come to fight against my
house?

Edric. The king can testify thence
that we will come.

His prowess in the mountains of the West,

Should care to plot against him in the
North.

Morcar. Who dares arraign us, king,
of such a plot?

Harold. Ye heard one witness even now.

Morcar. The craven !
There is a faction risen again for Tostig,
Since Tostig came with Norway—fright
not love.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye,
if I yield,

Follow against the Norseman ?

Morcar. Surely, surely !

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye
upon oath,

Help us against the Norman ?

Morcar. With good will ;

Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

Harold. Where is thy sister ?

Morcar. Somewhere hard at hand.
Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.*]

Harold. I doubt not but thou knowest
Why thou art summon'd.

Aldwyth. Why ?—I stay with these,
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,
And flay me all alive.

Harold. Canst thou love one
Who did discrown thine husband, unqueen
thee ?

Didst thou not love thine husband ?

Aldwyth. Oh ! my lord,
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage king—
That was, my lord, a match of policy.

Harold. Was it ?
I knew him brave : he loved his land : he
fain

Had made her great : his finger on her harp
(I heard him more than once) had in it
Wales,

Her floods, her woods, her hills : had I
been his,

I had been all Welsh.

Aldwyth. Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet
I saw thee drive him up his hills—and
women

Cling to the conquer'd, if they love, the
more ;

If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
We never—oh ! good Morcar, speak for us,
His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth.

Harold. Goodly news !

Morcar. Doubt it not thou ! Since
Griffyth's head was sent
To Edward, she hath said it.

Harold. I had rather
She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth,
Canst thou love me, thou knowing where
I love ?

Aldwyth. I can, my lord, for mine
own sake, for thine,
For England, for thy poor white dove,
who flutters

Between thee and the porch, but then
would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be still.

Harold. Canst thou love one, who
cannot love again ?

Aldwyth. Full hope have I that love
will answer love.

Harold. Then in the name of the
great God, so be it !

Come, Aldred, join our hands before the
hosts,

That all may see.

[*Aldred joins the hands of Harold
and Aldwyth and blesses them.*]

Voices. Harold, Harold and Aldwyth !

Harold. Set forth our golden Dragon,
let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales !
Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,
brave banner,

Blaze like a night of fatal stars on those

Who read their doom and die.
Where lie the Norsemen? on the Der-
went? ay

At Stamford-bridge.

Morecar, collect thy men; Edwin, my
friend—

Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—

Last night King Edward came to me in
dreams—

The rosy face and long down-silvering
beard—

He told me I should conquer :—

I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(*To his army.*)

Last night King Edward came to me in
dreams,

And told me we should conquer.

Voices. Forward! Forward!

Harold and Holy Cross!

Alwyth. The day is won!

SCENE II.—A PLAIN. BEFORE THE
BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.

HAROLD and his Guard.

Harold. Who is it comes this way?

Tostig? (*Enter TOSTIG, with a
small force.*) O brother,

What art thou doing here?

Tostig. I am foraging

For Norway's army.

Harold. I could take and slay thee.

Thou art in arms against us.

Tostig. Take and slay me,

For Edward loved me.

Harold. Edward had me spare thee.

Tostig. I hate King Edward, for he
join'd with thee

To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay
me, I say,

Or I shall count thee fool.

Harold. Take thee, or free thee,

Free thee or slay thee. Norway will have
war;

No man wou'd strike with Tostig, save
for Norway.

Thou art nothing to those I regard, save
for Norway.

Who loves not thee but we. What dost
thou have.

Trampling thy mother's bosom into idleness?
Tostig. She hath woo'd me from it
with such bitterness.

I come for mine own Earldom, my
Northumbria;

Thou hast given it to the enemy of our
house.

Harold. Northumbria threw thee off,
she will not have thee,

Thou hast misused her: and, O'erweening
crime!

Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son
of Orm,

Gambol in thine own hearth

Tostig. Thy slave, fat food!

His draw'd sword grazed us; I smote thee
suddenly,

I know not what I did. He held with
Morecar—

I hate myself for all things that I do.

Harold. And Murmur hails with us.
Come back with him.

Know what thou dost; and, we may find
for thee,

So thou be slay'd by thy handiwork,
Some better soldiers.

Tostig. What for Norway then?
He looks for land among us, he and his.

Harold. Seven feet of English land,
or something more.

Saying he is a guest.

Tostig. That is noble!

That would of God's gift.

Harold. Come thou back, and be
Once more a guest of Godwin.

Tostig (comes away). O brother,
brother,
O Harold—
*Harold (laying his hand on Tostig's
shoulder).* Nay then, come thou
back to us!
Tostig (after a pause, turning to him).
Never shall any man say that I,
that Tostig
Conjured the mightier Harold from his
North
To do the battle for me here in England,
Then left him for the meaner! thee!—
Thou hast no passion for the House of
Godwin—
Thou hast but cared to make thyself a
king—
Thou hast sold me for a cry.—
Thou gavest thy voice against me in the
Council—
I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy
thee.
Farewell for ever! [*Exit.*
Harold. On to Stamford-bridge!

SCENE III.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-
BRIDGE. BANQUET.

HAROLD and ALDWYTH. GURTH,
LEOFWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, and
other Earls and Thanes.

Voices. Hail! Harold! Aldwyth! hail,
bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth (talking with Harold). An-
swer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would
the wines

Of wedding had been dash'd into the cups
Of victory, and our marriage and thy glory
Been drunk together! these poor hands
but sew,

Spin, brooker—would that they were
man's to have held

The battle-axe by thee!

Harold. There was a moment
When being forced aloof from all my
guard,
And striking at Hardrada and his mad-
men
I had wish'd for any weapon.

Aldwyth. Why art thou sad?

Harold. I have lost the boy who play'd
at ball with me,
With whom I fought another fight than
this
Of Stamford-bridge.

Aldwyth. Ay! ay! thy victories
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy
side

He conquer'd with thee.

Harold. No—the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

Aldwyth. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen
hence?

Thy fierce forekings had clenched their
pirate hides

To the bleak church doors, like kites upon
a barn.

Harold. Is there so great a need to
tell thee why?

Aldwyth. Yea, am I not thy wife?

Voices. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth!
Bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth. Answer them! [*To Harold.*

Harold (to all). Earls and Thanes!
Full thanks for your fair greeting of my
bride!

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen!
the day,

Our day beside the Derwent will not shine
Less than a star among the goldenest hours
Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who
coming Dane

Died English. Every man about his king
Fought like a king; the king like his own
man,

No better; one for all, and all for one.

One said; and therefore have we scatter'd
back

The largest wave from Nonesuch ever
yet

Surged on us, and our battle-axes broken
The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his carrion
croak

From the gray sun for ever. Many has
gone—

Think to the dead who died for us, the
living

Who fought and would have died, but
happier lived,

If happier be to live; they both have life
In the large mouth of England, till her
voice

Ho with me woe! *Hail—hail!*

Morose. May all invaders perish like
Hardrada!

All traitors fall like Tostig!

[All bow but Harold.]

Address'd. Thy cup's full!

Harold. I saw the hand of Tostig
cover it.

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,
him

Reverently we buried. Friends, had I
been here,

Without too large self-lauding I must hold
The sequel had been other than his leg
With Norway, and this battle. Peace be
with him!

He was not of the worst. If there be
those

At banquet in this hall, and hearing me—
For there be those I fear who prick'd the
lion

To stir the spring, that sight of Harold
died

Might serve us not but English—quit
with them

*Edwin, & Godwin have answer'd well what
that good will should be from the world's
affliction should be Harold's. Make not
our Norse sullen; it is he not who*

Harold. Hail to the living who fought,
the dead who fell!

Edwin. Hail, hail!

First Thane. How true that answer
which King Harold gave

To his dead namesake, when he ask'd for
England?

Edwin. Seven furlongs English earth,
or something more,

Sending he is a good!

First Thane. Then be the land's!

Six feet and nothing more!

Edwin. Ay, but say'st

Thou hast not taken his measure.

First Thane. My six, Edward

I over-measure him. *Send'st thou to the
man*

How to send Norway without them to
lay?

Edwin. What is he begging
will that he will give.

To send our Harold's bones from under
his

My name would tell me of a mischief
coming

To a gentleman "Send'st thou and good to
me!"

First Thane. Let him come! let him
come. Here's to him, with a
swain! *[Drum.]*

Edwin. God rest him!

First Thane. Count'st thou which
had the strength?

To strike the standard waving off the
cross.

And send the shatter'd North again to sea,
 Scuttle his cockle-shell? What's Brun-
 anburg
 To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and so
 hard,
 So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.
 Thor—
 By God, we thought him dead—but our
 old Thor
 Heard his own thunder again, and woke
 and came
 Among us again, and mark'd the sons of
 those
 Who made this Britain England, break
 the North :

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,
 Heard how the war-horn sang,
 Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,
 Heard how the shield-wall rang,
 Iron on iron clang,
 Anvil on hammer bang—

Second Thane. Hammer on anvil,
 hammer on anvil. Old dog,
 Thou art drunk, old dog !

First Thane. Too drunk to fight with
 thee !

Second Thane. Fight thou with thine
 own double, not with me,

Keep that for Norman William !

First Thane. Down with William !

Third Thane. The washerwoman's
 brat !

Fourth Thane. The tanner's bastard !

Fifth Thane. The Falaise byblow !

[*Enter a Thane, from Pevensey, spat-
 ter'd with mud.*

Harold. Ay, but what late guest,
 As haggard as a fast of forty days,
 And caked and plaster'd with a hundred
 mires,
 Hath stumbled on our cups?

Thane from Pevensey. My lord the King!
 William the Norman, for the wind had
 changed—

Harold. I felt it in the middle of that
 fierce fight
 At Stamford-bridge. William hath landed,
 ha?

Thane from Pevensey. Landed at
 Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—
 Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—
 Hath harried mine own cattle—God con-
 found him !

I have ridden night and day from Peven-
 sey—
 A thousand ships—a hundred thousand
 men—

Thousands of horses, like as many lions
 Neighing and roaring as they leapt to
 land—

Harold. How oft in coming hast thou
 broken bread?

Thane from Pevensey. Some thrice,
 or so.

Harold. Bring not thy hollowness
 On our full feast. Famine is fear, were
 it but

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down,
 and eat,

And, when again red-blooded, speak
 again ;

(*Aside.*) The men that guarded Eng-
 land to the South

Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . . No
 power mine

To hold their force together. . . . Many
 are fallen

At Stamford-bridge. . . . the people
 stupid-sure

Sleep like their swine. . . . in South and
 North at once

I could not be.

(*Aloud.*) Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,
 Edwin !

(*Pointing to the wassail.*) The cause of England! these are drow'd in wassail,

And cannot see the world but thro' their wines!

Leave them! and thou too, Adwylth, must I leave—

Harsh is the news! hard is our honey-moon!

Thy pardon. (*Turning round to his attendants.*) Break the banquet up . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black news, Canst thy crop full, but come when thou art call'd. [*Exit Harold.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND, FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, *rising*; by him *seated*, HUGH MARGOT the Monk, GURU, LEOPWIN.

Harold. Refer my cause, my crown to Rome! . . . The wulf

Mudded the brook and predetermined all. Monk,

Thou hast said thy say, and had my constant 'No'

For all but instant battle. I hear no more.

Margot. Hear me again—for the last time. Arise,

Scatter thy people home, descend the hill, Lay hands of full allegiance in thy Lord's And crave his mercy, for the Holy Father Hath given this realm of England to the Norman.

Harold. Then for the last time, monk, I ask again
When had the Lateran and the Holy Father

To do with England's crown of her own king?

Margot. Earl, the two Christian Crowns shew to the East

To have the Pope's dominion in the West, Hang over him all the kingdoms of the West.

Harold. So!—(in) he!—Earl—I have a mind to play

The William with thine eyesight and thy tongue.

Earl—say—dost art he a messenger of William.

I am weary—go: make me not wrath with thee!

Margot. Mock-king, I am the messenger of God,

His Norman Daniel! Mine, Mine, Tekel!

Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare to cry.

You heaven is worth with *de*? Hear me again!

Our Saints have moved the Church thro' *sworn* the world,

And all the Heaven and every God they heard!

They know King Edward's promise and thine—*thine*.

Harold. Should they not know how England crown herself?

Not know that he now I had power to promise?

Not know that Edward never'd his own promise?

And for his part thence—back to that justice. [*Harold.*]

Tell how the saints are holier than he *sworn*.

Tell how your God is holier than the *sworn*.

And to him we stand accord on Senlac Hill,

And like the stones of Cook.

Margot. Hear it thro' me.
The realm for which thou art forsworn is
cursed,
The babe enwomb'd and at the breast is
cursed,
The corpse thou whelmed with thine
earth is cursed,
The soul who fighteth on thy side is cursed,
The seed thou sowest in thy field is cursed,
The steer wherewith thou plowest thy
field is cursed,
The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is cursed,
And thou, usurper, liar—

Harold. Out, beast monk !
[*Lifting his hand to strike him.*
Garth stops the blow.

I ever hated monks.

Margot. I am but a voice
Among you : murder, martyr me if ye
will—

Harold. Thanks, Garth ! The
simple, silent, selfless man
is worth a world of tonguesters. (*To*
Margot.) Get thee gone !
He means the thing he says. See him
out safe !

Leofwin. He hath blown himself as
red as fire with curses.
An honest fool ! Follow me, honest fool,
But if thou blurt thy curse among our folk,
I know not—I may give that egg-bald
head
The tap that silences.

Harold. See him out safe.
[*Exeunt Leofwin and Margot.*

Garth. Thou hast lost thine even
temper, brother Harold !

Harold. Garth, when I past by
Waltham, my foundation
For men who serve the neighbour, not
themselves,
I cast me down prone, praying ; and,
when I rose,

They told me that the Holy Rood had
lean'd
And bow'd above me ; whether that
which held it
Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were
bound
To that necessity which binds us down ;
Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy ;
Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin
Or glory, who shall tell ? but they were
sad,
And somewhat sadden'd me.

Garth. Yet if a fear,
Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange
Saints
By whom thou swarest, should have
power to balk
Thy puissance in this fight with him, who
made
And heard thee swear—brother—I have
not sworn—

If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall ?
But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king ;
And, if I win, I win, and thou art king ;
Draw thou to London, there make
strength to breast
Whatever chance, but leave this day to
me.

Leofwin (entering). And waste the
land about thee as thou goest,
And be thy hand as winter on the field,
To leave the foe no forage.

Harold. Noble Garth !
Best son of Godwin ! If I fall, I fall—
The doom of God ! How should the
people fight
When the king flies ? And, Leofwin,
art thou mad ?
How should the King of England waste
the fields
Of England, his own people ?—No glance
yet
Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath ?

Leafwin. No, but a shoal of wives
upon the heath,
And someone saw thy willy-nilly nun
Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Harold. Vying a tear with our cold
dews, a sigh
With these low-moaning heavens. Let
her be fetch'd.

We have parted from our wife without
reproach,
Tho' we have dived thro' all her practices ;
And that is well.

Leafwin. I saw here even now :
She hath not left us.

Harold. Nought of Morcar then ?

Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard ; thine,
William's or his own
As wind blows, or tide flows : belike he
watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls
Wash up that old crown of Northumber-
land.

Harold. I married her for Morcar—a
sin against

The truth of love. Evil for good, it seems,
Is oft as childless of the good as evil
For evil.

Leafwin. Good for good hath borne
at times
A bastard false as William.

Harold. Ay, if Wisdom
Fair'd not with Good. But I am some-
what worn,
A snatch of sleep were like the peace of
God.

Gurth, Leafwin, go once more about the
hill—

What did the dead man call it—Sanguelac,
The lake of blood ?

Leafwin. A lake that dips in William
As well as Harold.

Harold. Like enough. I have seen
The trenches dug, the palisades uprear'd

And wattled thick with ash and willow-
wands ;

Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round
once more ;

See all be sound and whole. No Norman
horse

Can shatter England, standing shield by
shield ;

Tell that again to all.

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Harold. Our guardsman hath but
toil'd his hand and foot,

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some
wine ! *(One pours wine into a
goblet which he hands to Harold.)*

Too much !

What ? we must use our battle-axe to-
day.

Our guardsmen have slept well, since we
came in ?

Leafwin. Ay, slept and more'd.

Your second-sighted man

That scared the dying conscience of the
king,

Misheard their snores for groans. They
are up again

And chanting that old song of Burnantheow
Where England conquer'd.

Harold. That is well. The Norman.
What is he doing ?

Leafwin. Praying for Normandy ;
Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their
bells.

Harold. And our old songers pray
for England too !

But by all Saints—

Leafwin. Barring the Norman ?

Harold. Nay,

Were the great trumpet blowing to-mor-
row day dawn,

I needs must run. Call when the
Norman comes—

(Exit all, but Harold.)
U U

No horse—thousands of horses—our
shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—break—
[Sleeps.

Vision of Edward. Son Harold, I thy
king, who came before

To tell thee thou should'st win at
Stamford-bridge,

Come yet once more, from where I am at
peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac hill—
Sanguelac !

Vision of Wulfnoth. O brother, from
my ghastly oubliette

I send my voice across the narrow seas—
No more, no more, dear brother, never-
more—

Sanguelac !

Vision of Tostig. O brother, most
unbrotherlike to me,

Thou gavest thy voice against me in my life,
I give my voice against thee from the
grave—

Sanguelac !

Vision of Norman Saints. O hapless
Harold ! King but for an hour !

Thou swarest falsely by our blessed bones,
We give our voice against thee out of
heaven !

Sanguelac ! Sanguelac ! The arrow ! the
arrow !

*Harold (starting up, battle-axe in
hand).* Away !

My battle-axe against your voices. Peace !
The king's last word—'the arrow !' I
shall die—

I die for England then, who lived for
England—

What nobler ? men must die.

I cannot fall into a falser world—

I have done no man wrong. Tostig, poor
brother,

Art thou so anger'd ?

Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy
hands

Save for thy wild and violent will that
wrench'd

All hearts of freemen from thee. I could
do

No other than this way advise the king
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible
That mortal men should bear their earthly
heats

Into yon bloodless world, and threaten us
thence

Unschool'd of Death ? Thus then thou
art revenged—

I left our England naked to the South
To meet thee in the North. The Norse-
man's raid

Hath helpt the Norman, and the race of
Godwin

Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking
thoughts

Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
Of sullen slumber, and arise again
Disjointed : only dreams—where mine
own self

Takes part against myself ! Why ? for a
spark

Of self-disdain born in me when I swear
Falsely to him, the falsè Norman, over
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by
whom

I knew not that I swear,—not for my-
self—

For England—yet not wholly—

(Enter EDITH.)

Edith, Edith,

Get thou into thy cloister as the king
Will'd it : be safe : the perjury-mongering
Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy
Church

To break her close! There the great
God of truth

Fill all thine hours with peace!—A lying
devil

Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife
—I fain

Had made my marriage not a lie; I could
not:

Thou art my bane! and thou in after years
Praying perchance for this poor soul of
mine

In cold, white cells beneath an icy moon—
This memory to thee!—and this to
England,

My legacy of war against the Pope
From child to child, from Pope to Pope,
from age to age,

Till the sea wash her level with her shores,
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

Aldwyth (to Edith). Away from him!

Edith. I will . . . I have not spoken
to the king

One word; and one I must. Farewell!
[*Going.*]

Harold. Not yet.

Stay.
Edith. To what use?

Harold. The king commands thee,
woman!

(*To Aldwyth.*)

Have thy two brethren sent their forces in?
Aldwyth. Nay, I fear not.

Harold. Then there's no force in thee!
Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's ear
To part me from the woman that I loved!
Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-
brians!

Thou hast been false to England and to
me!—

As . . . in some sort . . . I have been
false to thee.

Leave me. No more—Pardon me first,
sister—Go!

Aldwyth. Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

Harold (staring). With a love
Passing thy love for Godlyth! wherefore
now?

(*Shey my first and last encouragement to*)

Aldwyth. O Harold! husband! Shall
we meet again?

Harold. After the battle—after the
battle. Go.

Aldwyth. I go. (*Exit*) That I could
stab her standing there!

[*Exit Aldwyth.*]

Edith. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

Harold. Never! never!

Edith. I saw it in her eyes!

Harold. I see it in thine.
And not on these—our England—all
God's doom!

Edith. On *thee*? on me. And thou
art England! Alas!

Was England. Ethelred was smiling,
England

Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

Harold. Edith,
The sign in heaven—the sudden light of
sun—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the dark
dream—

The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Host
That bow'd to me at Walsingham—Edith, if
I, the last English King of England—

Edith. No,
First of a line that coming from the
people,

And chosen by the people—

Harold. And fighting for
And dying for the people—

Edith. Living! living!

Harold. You say good what? Alas
art Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

Edith. What matters how I look ?
Have we not broken Wales and Norse-
land ? slain,
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate
war,
Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-arms
Than William.

Harold. Ay, my girl, no tricks in
him—
No bastard he ! when all was lost, he
yell'd,
And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the
ground,
And swaying his two-handed sword about
him,
Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon us
And died so, and I loved him as I hate
This liar who made me liar. If Hate can
kill,

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-axe—
Edith. Waste not thy might before
the battle !

Harold. No,
And thou must hence. Stigand will see
thee safe,
And so—Farewell.

[He is going, but turns back.]

The ring thou darest not wear,
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet my
hand.

*[Harold shows the ring which is on
his finger.]*

Farewell !

[He is going, but turns back again.]

I am dead as Death this day to ought
of earth's
Save William's death or mine.

Edith. Thy death !—to-day !
Is it not thy birthday ?

Harold. Ay, that happy day !
A birthday welcome ! happy days and
many !
One—this ! *[They embrace.]*

Look, I will bear thy blessing into the
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman cries (heard in the distance).
Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Enter GURTH.

Gurth. The Norman moves !

Harold. Harold and Holy Cross !
[Exeunt Harold and Gurth.]

Enter STIGAND.

Stigand. Our Church in arms—the
lamb the lion—not
Spear into pruning-hook—the counter
way—
Cowl, helm ; and crozier, battle-axe.
Abbot Alfwig,
Leofric, and all the monks of Peterboro'
Strike for the king ; but I, old wretch,
old Stigand,
With hands too limp to brandish iron—
and yet

I have a power—would Harold ask me
for it—

I have a power.

Edith. What power, holy father ?

Stigand. Power now from Harold to
command thee hence
And see thee safe from Senlac.

Edith. I remain !

Stigand. Yea, so will I, daughter,
until I find
Which way the battle balance. I can
see it

From where we stand : and, live or die,
I would

I were among them !

Canons from Waltham (singing without).

Salva patriam

Sancte Pater,

Salva Fili,

Salva Spiritus,

Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater!

Edith. Are those the blessed angels
quiring, father?

Stigand. No, daughter, but the
canons out of Waltham,

The king's foundation, that have follow'd
him.

Edith. O God of battles, make their
wall of shields

Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their
palisades!

What is that whirring sound?

Stigand. The Norman arrow!

Edith. Look out upon the battle—is
he safe?

Stigand. The king of England stands
between his banners.

He glitters on the crowning of the hill.

God save King Harold!

Edith. —chosen by his people

And fighting for his people!

Stigand. There is one

Come as Goliath came of yore—he flings

His brand in air and catches it again,

He is chanting some old warsong.

Edith. And no David

To meet him?

Stigand. Ay, there springs a Saxon on
him,

Falls—and another falls.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Lo! our good Gurth hath
smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam

Ruit predator,

Illorum, Domine,

Scutum scindatur!

Hostis per Angliæ

Plagas lanceatur;

Casa crematur,

Pastor fugatur

Grex trucidatur—

Stigand. Illos trueda, Domine.

Edith. — Ay, good father.

Canons (singing).

Illorum sceleram

Pœna sequatur!

English cries. Harold and Holy

Cross! Out! out!

Stigand. Our javelins

Answer their arrows. All the Norman
foot

Are storming up the hill. The range of
knights

Sit, each a statue on his horse, and wait.

English cries. Harold and God Al-
mighty!

Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Canons (singing).

Eques cum pedite

Propulsatur!

Illorum in lacrymas

Cruor fundatur!

Petunt, petunt,

Anglia precatur.

Stigand. Look, daughter, look!

Edith. Nay, father, look for me!

Stigand. Our axes lighten with a single
flash

About the summit of the hill, and heads

And arms are sliver'd off and splinter'd by.

Their lightning—and they fly—the Nor-
man dies.

Edith. Stigand, O father, have we
won the day?

Stigand. No, daughter, no—they fall
behind the home—

Their horns are straggling to the har-
ricane!

¹ The *a* throughout these Latin hymns should
be sounded broad, as in 'father.'

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter
Floating above their helmets—ha ! he is
down !

Edith. He down ! Who down ?

Stigand. The Norman Count is down.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
England !

Stigand. No, no, he hath risen again
—he bares his face—

Shouts something—he points onward—
all their horse

Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming up.

Edith. O God of battles, make his
battle-axe keen

As thine own sharp-dividing justice, heavy
As thine own bolts that fall on crimeful
heads

Charged with the weight of heaven
wherefrom they fall !

Canons (singing).

Jacta tonitrua

Deus bellator !

Surgas e tenebris,

Sis vindicator !

Fulmina, fulmina

Deus vastator !

Edith. O God of battles, they are
three to one,

Make thou one man as three to roll them
down !

Canons (singing).

Equus cum equite

Dejiciatur !

Acies, Acies

Prona sternatur !

Illorum lanceas

Frangere Creator !

Stigand. Yea, yea, for how their lances
snap and shiver

Against the shifting blaze of Harold's axe !
War-woodman of old Woden, how he
fells

The mortal cosp of faces ! There ! And
there !

The horse and horseman cannot meet the
shield,

The blow that brains the horseman cleaves
the horse,

The horse and horseman roll along the
hill,

They fly once more, they fly, the Norman
flies !

Equus cum equite

Præcipitatur.

Edith. O God, the God of truth hath
heard my cry.

Follow them, follow them, drive them to
the sea !

Illorum scelera

Pœna sequatur !

Stigand. Truth ! no ; a lie ; a trick,
a Norman trick !

They turn on the pursuer, horse against
foot,

They murder all that follow.

Edith. Have mercy on us !

Stigand. Hot-headed fools—to burst
the wall of shields !

They have broken the commandment of
the king !

Edith. His oath was broken—O holy
Norman Saints,

Ye that are now of heaven, and see
beyond

Your Norman shrines, pardon it, pardon
it,

That he forswore himself for all he loved,
Me, me and all ! Look out upon the
battle !

Stigand. They thunder again upon the
barricades.

My sight is eagle, but the strife so thick—
This is the hottest of it : hold, ash ! hold,
willow !

English cries. Out, out !

Norman cries. Ha Rou !

Stigand. Ha ! Gurth hath leapt upon him

And slain him ; he hath fallen.

Edith. And I am thank'd.
Glory to God in the Highest ! fallen,
fallen !

Stigand. No, no, his horse—the
mounts another—wields

His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and
Gurth,

Our noble Gurth, is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !

Stigand. And Leofwin is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !

O Thou that knowest, let not my strong
prayer

Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I love
The husband of another !

Norman cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. I do not hear our English
war-cry.

Stigand. No.

Edith. Look out upon the battle—is
he safe ?

Stigand. He stands between the ban-
ners with the dead

So piled about him he can hardly
move.

Edith (cries up the tower). Out !
out !

Norman cries. Ha Rou !

Edith (cries out). Harold and Holy
Cross !

Norman cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. What is that whirring sound ?

Stigand. The Norman sends his arrows
up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the palisade !

Edith. Look out upon the hill—is
Harold there ?

Stigand. Sanguelco—Sanguelco—the
arrow—the arrow !—away !

SCENE II.—FIELD OF THE BATTLE
NIGHT.

ALDWYNE AND EDITH.

Aldwyne. O Edith, my love, live ! O
Harold, Harold !

Our Harold—we did never see him more.

Edith. For there was more than safety
in my life.

And so the saint was worth. I cannot
love them.

For they are Norman-sons—and yet I
should—

They are so much holier than their father's
son

With whom they play'd their games against
the king !

Aldwyne. The king is slain, the
kingdom overthrown !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyne. How no matter, Harold
slain ?—

I cannot find his body. O help me find it !
O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee,

Forgive me thou, and help me here !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyne. Nay help me, me forgive
me ?

Edith. So thou wilt.

Aldwyne. I say it now, forgive me !

Edith. Cross me not !

I am seeking one who wouldst give in
secret.

Whisper I can't ought only know it. Ha !
What art thou doing here among the dead ?

They are stripping the dead bodies naked
yet.

And thou art come to see them at their
ripping !

Aldwyne. O Edith, Edith, I have lost
my arrow

And husband.

Edith. So have I.

Aldwyth. I tell thee, girl,
I am seeking my dead Harold.

Edith. And I mine !
The Holy Father strangled him with a hair
Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt ;
The wicked sister clapt her hands and
laugh'd ;

Then all the dead fell on him.

Aldwyth. Edith, Edith—

Edith. What was he like, this hus-
band? like to thee?

Call not for help from me. I knew him
not.

He lies not here : not close beside the
standard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of
England.

Go further hence and find him.

Aldwyth. She is crazed !

Edith. That doth not matter either.
Lower the light.

He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, OSGOD and
ATHELRIC, with torches. They
turn over the dead bodies and
examine them as they pass.*

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.

Athelric. More likely Godric.

Osgod. I am sure this body

Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

Athelric. So it is !

No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from
brow to knee !

Osgod. And here is Leofwin.

Edith. And here is He !

Aldwyth. Harold? Oh no—nay, if
it were—my God,

They have so maim'd and murder'd all
his face

There is no man can swear to him.

Edith. But one woman !

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not someone ask'd me for
forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife
Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

*Enter COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM
MALET.*

William. Who be these women?
And what body is this?

Edith. Harold, thy better !

William. Ay, and what art thou?

Edith. His wife !

Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the
Queen ! [*Pointing out Aldwyth.*

William (to Aldwyth). Wast thou his
Queen?

Aldwyth. I was the Queen of Wales.

William. Why then of England.

Madam, fear us not.

(*To Malet.*) Knowest thou this other?

Malet. When I visited England,
Some held she was his wife in secret—
some—

Well—some believed she was his para-
mour.

Edith. Norman, thou liest ! liars all
of you,

Your Saints and all ! I am his wife !
and she—

For look, our marriage ring !

[*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt ! but I am wiser
now . . .

I am too wise . . . Will none among
you all

Bear me true witness—only for this once—
That I have found it here again ?

[*She puts it on.*

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*

William. Death!—and enough o'
death for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,
My day, when I was born.

Malet. And this dead king's
Who, king or no, both kindly fought
and fallen,

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-
even

I held it with him in his English halls,
His day, with all his roof-tree ringing
'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Gray;
When all men counted Harold would be
king,

And Harold was most happy.

William. Thou art half English.
Take them away!

Malet, I vow to build a church to God
Here on this hill of battle; let our high
altar
stand where their standard fell . . .
where these two lie.

Take them away, I do not love to see
them.

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,
Malet!

Malet. FASTER than they. Must I hitch
her arms off?

How shall I part them?

William. Leave them. Let them lie!
Bury him and his paramour together.

He that was false in love to me, it seems
Was false to his own wife. We will not
give him

A Christian burial; yet he was a warrior,
And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted
vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak
And lay them both upon the waste sea-
shore

At Hastings, there to grant the dead the
wishes.

He did for some himself;—a warrior, say,
And he that Holy Trinity fought for us,
And that the false Northumbrian had
sworn,

And save for the *crosses* given within
the camp—

Sharpen'd and set against him—who
can tell?—

Three horses had I with himself re-
twice

I thought that all was lost. Since I
knew battle,

And that was from my boyhood, never
yet—

No, by the splendour of God—never I
ought men

Like Harold and his paramour, and his
grand

Old English. Every foot stood by him;
Fell where he stood. They loved him;
and, pray God!

My Normans may not love to go with
me

To the shore of death. Of me will stand
at nothing.

Make them again one people—Normans,
English!

And English, Normans—see death's hand
a hand!

To gray the world with, and a line to
stamp it . . .

How. Pray the saints! It is never
No more blood!

I am king of England, so they thrust me
on;

And I will rule according to their laws,
(To Abbot's.) Moreover, we will correct
them with all losses.

Abbot's. My gentlemen, be gone
till I see here.

THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light—accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

May 1879.

ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way down
rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky
to sky.
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines
that fledged
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love
watcheth Love,
In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.
Keep thou thy name of 'Lover's Bay.'
See, sirs,

Even now the Goddess of the Past, that
takes
The heart, and sometimes touches but
one string
That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd
chords
To some old melody, begins to play
That air which pleased her first. I feel
thy breath;
I come, great Mistress of the ear and
eye:
Thy breath is of the pinewood; and tho'
years
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy
strait
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,
 To pass my hand across thy brows, and
 muse
 On those dear hills, that never more will
 meet
 The sight that throbs and aches beneath
 my touch,
 As tho' there beat a heart in either eye ;
 For when the outer lights are darken'd
 thus,
 The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
 It grows upon me now—the semicircle
 Of dark-blue waters and the narrow fringe
 Of curving leashes of sweatlets of dripping
 green—
 Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse
 aloft
 That open'd on the pines with doors of
 glass,
 A meadow's nest—the pleasure-boat that
 rock'd,
 Light-green with its own shadow, keel to
 keel,
 Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
 That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope !

They come, they crowd upon me all at
 once
 Moved from the cloud of forgotten
 things,
 That sometimes on the horizon of the mind
 Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in
 storm—
 Flash upon flash they lighten their me-
 days
 Of dewy dawning and the amber even
 When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
 Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd
 Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the
 tide
 Flash'd, sapping its worn ribs ; and all
 without

The dimly-rising rollers on the dimly
 Chalk'd, waiting to coil about, and then
 to roll.
 Down those four seasons like a setting
 sun.
 Mix with the gorgeous west the light-
 house storm,
 And silver-milling Venus on the left
 Would strew her hair on her belony line,
 To crown it with herself.

How, yes, my love

Waver'd at anchor with me, when day
 hung
 From his midlone to Heaven's airy
 halls :
 Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,
 Elixir'd like untroubled comets about her
 lips,
 Quiver'd a flying glory on her belt.
 Leapt like a passing thought across her
 eyes :
 And mine with one that will not pass
 till earth
 And Heaven part too, swirl on my
 lantern a day
 Most merry day, but lamplit from within
 As 'twere with show, now was dark-
 hair'd, darkeyed :
 Oh, with that eye ! a slight gleam of
 them
 Will grieve a whole life from birth to
 death.
 I possess'd all things else but my work light.
 In yon sea-bird in yon sun ! but not them.
 You too yourself in this gesture,
 You pass'd and that depth, for they go
 back,
 And further back, and still will follow
 themselves
 Out into the deep east, that evermore
 Face springing from his nostrils in the
 brain,

Still pouring thro', floods with redundant
life

Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago

I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me : I had died,
But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,
Thine image, like a charm of light and
strength

Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.

Tho' from the deep vault where the heart
of Hope

Fell into dust, and crumbled in the
dark—

Forgetting how to render beautiful

Her countenance with quick and health-
ful blood

Thou didst not sway me upward ; could
I perish

While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Did'st swathe thyself all round Hope's
quiet urn

For ever? He, that saith it, hath o'er-
stept

The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou
art light.

To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-re-
new'd.

For Time and Grief abode too long with
Life,

And, like all other friends i' the world, at
last

They grew weary of her fellowship :
So Time and Grief did beckon unto
Death,

And Death drew nigh and beat the doors
of Life ;

But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with
Death,—

'This is a charmed dwelling which I
hold ;'

So Death gave back, and would no
further come.

Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone,
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
The Present is the vassal of the Past :
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
And cannot die, and am, in having been—
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on to-day and out of
place ;

A body journeying onward, sick with
toil,

The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
The grasp of hopeless grief about my
heart,

And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
Which long ago they had glean'd and
garner'd up

Into the granaries of memory—
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious
brain,

Chinked as you see, and seam'd—and
all the while

The light soul twines and mingles with
the growths

Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
Married, made one with, molten into all
The beautiful in Past of act or place,

And like the all-enduring camel, driven
Far from the diamond fountain by the
palms,

Who toils across the middle moonlit
nights,

Or when the white heats of the blinding
noons

Beat from the concave sand ; yet in him
keeps

A thought of that sweet hatred that he
loves,
To stay his feet from falling, and his
spirit
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
When I began to love. How should I
tell you?
Or from the after fullness of my heart,
Flow back again unto my tender spring
And rest of love, tho' every turn and
depth
Between is clearer in my life than all
its present show. Ye know not what ye
ask.

How should the broad and open flower
tell
What sort of bud it was, when, pressed
together
In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken
folds,
It seemed to keep its sweetness to itself,
Yet was not the less sweet for that it
show'd?

For young Life knows not when young
Life was born,
But takes it all for granted; neither Love,
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can re-
member
Love in the world, but restless searched,
Looking on her that brought him to the
light:

Or as men know not when they fall asleep
Into delicious dream, nor what life,
So know I not when I began to love.
This is my sum of knowledge: that my
love
Grew with myself—say rather, was my
growth,
My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
My outward circling air wherewith I
breathe,

What ye behold to be life, and journey
To to me daily life was with death:
For how should I have lived and yet
have lived?
Can ye bid off the sweetness from the
flower,
The colour and the sweetness from the
rose,
And please them by themselves; or let
spring
Their perfumes and their brightness from
the stem,
And show perfume the flower, or colour?
Of health and honour my life and love,
And all we know I am! 'Tis even
thus.

In that I live I live: because I live
I live: what's it to know ye die
Is foreign to this life; and because?
Our God unkneits the coils of the one,
Then is no shade or field of misery
Smothering the other.

Many, young people,
If ye have some money and my most of
life,
And well I could have linger'd in that
proof,
So were you (or'd) to the dwelling place,
In the Mayden of childhood, sweeten
The flesh and dawn of youth, we lived
together,
As yet, close together on those hills.

Indeed he saw my day my father died,
And he was happy that he saw I not;
But I and the first day on his grave
From the sun's eye came into light at
once.
As I and he I do remember equal years
So she, my love, is of my age with me.
How like each other was the birth of
each!

On the same morning, almost the same
hour,

Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(Oh falsehood of all starcraft!) we were
born.

How like each other was the birth of
each !

The sister of my mother—she that bore
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the
child,

With its true-touch'd pulses in the flow
And hourly visitation of the blood,
Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—
My mother's sister, mother of my love,
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
One twofold mightier than the other was,
In giving so much beauty to the world,
And so much wealth as God had charged
her with—

Loathing to put it from herself for ever,
Left her own life with it ; and dying thus,
Crowned with her highest act the placid
face

And breathless body of her good deeds
past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She
was motherless

And I without a father. So from each
Of those two pillars which from earth
uphold

Our childhood, one had fallen away, and
all

The careful burthen of our tender years
Trembled upon the other. He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling tender-
ness.

He waked for both : he prayed for both :
he slept

Dreaming of both : nor was his love the
less

Because it was divided, and shot forth
Boughs on each side, laden with whole-
some shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister : on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested : one soft
lap

Pillow'd us both : a common light of eyes
Was on us as we lay : our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from
thence

The stream of life, one stream, one life,
one blood,

One sustenance, which, still as thought
grew large,

Still larger moulding all the house of
thought,

Made all our tastes and fancies like,
perhaps—

All—all but one ; and strange to me,
and sweet,

Sweet thro' strange years to know that
whatso'er

Our general mother meant for me alone,
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us :
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
I shared with her in whom myself
remains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,
They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.

They tell me that we would not be
alone,—

We cried when we were parted ; when I
wept.

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow ; that we
loved

The sound of one-another's voices more—
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and
learn'd

To lip in tune together; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face,
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing
lip,

Folding each other, breathing on each
other,

Dreaming together (dreaming of each
other

They should have added), till the morn-
ing light

Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy
pane

Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we
woke

To gaze upon each other. If this be
true,

At thought of which my whole soul
languishes

And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath
—as this!

A man in some still garden should infuse
Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,

Till, drunk with its own wine, and over-
full

Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
It fall on its own thorns— if this be true—

And that way my wish leads me ever-
more

Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a thought.

Why in the utter stillness of the soul
Doth question'd memory answer not, nor
tell

Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har-
mony?

O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-
year

Of Being, which with earliest violets
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks

Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not
speak of thee;

Thou hast not seen the *Amoroso* never
knew thee.

They cannot understand me— how we
then

A term of *lightness* you— Ye would not
laugh.

If I should tell you how I heard us
thought!

The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient
creeds.

Gray relics of the memories of the world,
Which are as gems set in my memory.

Because she learnt them with me; or
what use

To know her father left us just before
The daffodil was blown? or how we
found

The dead man cast upon the shore? All
this

Seems to the quiet daylight of your
mind.

But clear we'd surely, and in the dark of
mine

Is traced with flames. Move with me to
the scene.

There came a *glorious morning*, and a
—

As dawn but saw a *passion*. *Marsyas*
On such a morning would have flung
himself

From cloud to cloud, and down with
balanced wings

To some tall mountain, when I said to
her,

'A day for gods to sleep,' she answered,
'Ay,

And man to run?' for as that other
gods

Shaking his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
The *passion*, and the *phantom* and the
—

Suck'd into oneness like a little star
 Were drunk into the inmost blue, we
 stood,
 When first we came from out the pines at
 noon,
 With hands for eaves, uplooking and
 almost
 Waiting to see some blessed shape in
 heaven,
 So bathed we were in brilliance. Never
 yet
 Before or after have I known the spring
 Pour with such sudden deluges of light
 Into the middle summer ; for that day
 Love, rising, shook his wings, and
 charged the winds
 With spiced May-sweets from bound to
 bound, and blew
 Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his
 soul
 Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-
 off
 His mountain-altars, his high hills, with
 flame
 Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound :
 The great pine shook with lonely sounds
 of joy
 That came on the sea-wind. As moun-
 tain streams
 Our bloods ran free : the sunshine seem'd
 to brood
 More warmly on the heart than on the
 brow.
 We often paused, and, looking back, we
 saw
 The clefts and openings in the mountains
 fill
 With the blue valley and the glistening
 brooks,

And all the low dark groves, a land of
 love !
 A land of promise, a land of memory,
 A land of promise flowing with the milk
 And honey of delicious memories !
 And down to sea, and far as eye could
 ken,
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy
 Land,
 Still growing holier as you near'd the
 bay,
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
 The grassy platform on some hill, I
 stoop'd,
 I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her
 brows
 And mine made garlands of the selfsame
 flower,
 Which she took smiling, and with my
 work thus
 Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or
 twice she told me
 (For I remember all things) to let grow
 The flowers that run poison in their
 veins.
 She said, ' The evil flourish in the world.'
 Then playfully she gave herself the lie—
 ' Nothing in nature is unbeautiful ;
 So, brother, pluck, and spare not.' So
 I wove
 Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem,
 ' whose flower,
 Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
 Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,
 Is without sweetness, but who crowns
 himself
 Above the secret poisons of his heart
 In his old age.' A graceful thought of
 hers
 Grav'n on my fancy ! And oh, how like
 a nymph,

A rarely mountain nymph she lov'd :
 Snow native
 O'er the hills she rook on I While I
 gaz'd.
 My coronal slowly disentrined itself
 And fell between us both; tho' whin I
 gaz'd
 My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of
 bliss
 That strike across the soul in prayer, and
 show us
 That we are surely heard. Methought a
 light
 Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and
 shined
 A solid glory on her bright black hair :
 A light methought broke from her dark,
 dark eyes,
 And shot itself into the singing winds ;
 A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white
 robe
 As from a glass in the sun, and fell about
 My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came

To what our people call 'The Hill of
 Woe.'
 A bridge is there, that, look'd at from
 beneath
 Seems but a silver'd filament ⁱⁿ rock.
 The yawning of an earthquake-chasm
 chasm.
 And thence one night, when all the
 winds were loud,
 A woeful man (for so the story went)
 Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd
 himself
 Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
 Pierce in the strength of far descent, a
 stream
 Flies with a-hatle'd foam along the chasm.
 The path was perilous, loosely strown
 with crags :

We crossed slowly ; yet we left there
 none
 The joy of life we everpass overpass,
 And visions of youth, and fading
 days
 On all thro' that look'd down to us ; and
 off
 In smother'd answer between I and you to
 me,
 High rose all the unremember'd earth,
 To breathe with the soul in heaven it
 call'd ;
 And soon that joy was I to her (as soon
 Her qualities and her soul, among her
 Solldlight, you all part, until she saw
 Beneath her feet the region far away,
 Beyond the narrow mountain's rocky
 base,
 Burnt-interrupted prospect—death and hill,
 And hollow lived and spiced in the lips,
 And step-down, souls all fastened
 on
 Gild'd with leaves, or slat'd, or
 spun,
 And glory of land was unmarred,
 Whence rose as if wood breath and some
 of gold,
 And over all the great good rising
 And shining, would be any of it
 interest
 With falling head, or blossom'd, low-
 and hat,
 Pressing the mighty hemlock on the
 wood,
 A people come of mountain-caves,
 deep,
 Whose mysterious paths of living
 words
 The incense of blood and fat had

At length

Descending from the pass and landing
 both.

There on the tremulous bridge, that from
 beneath
 Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in
 air,
 We paused amid the splendour. All the
 west
 And ev'n unto the middle south was
 ribb'd
 And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The
 sun below,
 Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave,
 shower'd down
 Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over
 That various wilderness a tissue of light
 Unparallel'd. On the other side, the
 moon,
 Half-melted into thin blue air, stood
 still,
 And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,
 Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes
 To indue his lustre; most unloverlike,
 Since in his absence full of light and joy,
 And giving light to others. But this
 most,
 Next to her presence whom I lov'd so
 well,
 Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart
 As to my outward hearing: the loud
 stream,
 Forth issuing from his portals in the crag
 (A visible link unto the home of my
 heart),
 Ran amber toward the west, and nigh
 the sea
 Parting my own loved mountains was
 received,
 Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy
 Of that small bay, which out to open
 main
 Glow'd intermingling close beneath the
 sun.
 Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound
 Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:

Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it,
 and the earth
 They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

 We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were
 bright, and mine
 Were dim with floating tears, that shot
 the sunset
 In lightnings round me; and my name
 was borne
 Upon her breath. Henceforth my name
 has been
 A hallow'd memory like the names of
 old,
 A center'd, glory-circled memory,
 And a peculiar treasure, brooking not
 Exchange or currency: and in that hour
 A hope flow'd round me, like a golden
 mist
 Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,
 A moment, ere the onward whirlwind
 shatter it,
 Waver'd and floated—which was less
 than Hope,
 Because it lack'd the power of perfect
 Hope;
 But which was more and higher than all
 Hope,
 Because all other Hope had lower aim;
 Even that this name to which her gracious
 lips
 Did lend such gentle utterance, this one
 name,
 In some obscure hereafter, might in-
 wreath
 (How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her
 love,
 With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart
 and strength.
 'Brother,' she said, 'let this be call'd
 henceforth
 The Hill of Hope;' and I replied, 'O
 sister,

My will is one with thine ; the Hill of
Hope.'

Nevertheless, we did not change the
name.

I did not speak : I could not speak my
love.

Love lieth deep : Love dwells not in the
depths.

Love wraps his wings on either side the
heart,

Constraining it with kisses close and
warm,

Absorbing all the incense of sweet
thoughts

So that they pass not to the shrine of
sound.

Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance

Of Love ; but how should Earthly mea-
sure mete

The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited
Love.

Who scarce can tune his high majestic
voice

Unto the illimitable that winds the
spheres,

Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odour of the spacious air,

Scarce housed within the arch of the
Earth,

Be cabin'd up in words and syllables.

Whith pass with that which breathes
them ? Sooner Earth

Might go round Heaven, and the strait
girth of Time

Inswathe the fulness of Eternity.
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy
hour,

Thou art blessed in the years, divinest
day !

O Goddess of the soul which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,

And thy passionately noted brow—
Who wilt inspire those sweet thrilling tones

To give upon this still blue year and day
With swelling on the light and breath of
Love.

Thy home is sweetest worship among
hearts :

Had I had thee, I had my mouth to die,
For that would sound me like the light of
Heaven,—

Had I had thee, I had not known the
death :

You had the Power from whose right
hand the light

Of Life cometh, and from whose left hand
floweth

The Shadow of Death, perverted with-
ness.

Wherof to all but those the wholesome
use,

Scorning the very name, overflow the
spheres :

Thou had to scorn'd my day with sight,
and driven

My sunset to the sunset whereon it
setteth—

From his own smiling presence—
On me, smiling that blood of glory
and life.

Unfit, and in that glory I had sought
The other arm for you I goodly saw

Which—smiling for the moment had to
death,

And dipping his head low beneath the
cross.

Yet having found you him his own day,
In confidence of unshaken strength,

steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from
light to light.

And he hath his unfurrow'd furrows set
Into a stream ready, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward
 hill ;
 We past from light to dark. On the
 other side
 Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,
 Which none have fathom'd. If you go
 far in
 (The country people rumour) you may
 hear
 The moaning of the woman and the child,
 Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.
 I too have heard a sound—perchance of
 streams
 Running far on within its inmost halls,
 The home of darkness ; but the cavern-
 mouth,
 Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
 Gives birth to a brawling brook, that
 passing lightly
 Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
 Is presently received in a sweet grave
 Of eglantines, a place of burial
 Far lovelier than its cradle ; for unseen,
 But taken with the sweetness of the place,
 It makes a constant bubbling melody
 That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower
 down
 Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding,
 leaves
 Low banks of yellow sand ; and from the
 woods
 That belt it rise three dark, tall cy-
 presses,—
 Three cyresses, symbols of mortal woe,
 That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,
 And sitting down upon the golden moss,
 Held converse sweet and low—low con-
 verse sweet,
 In which our voices bore least part. The
 wind
 Told a lovetale beside us, how he woo'd

The waters, and the waters answering
 lisp'd
 To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,
 Fainted at intervals, and grew again
 To utterance of passion. Ye cannot
 shape
 Fancy so fair as is this memory.
 Methought all excellence that ever was
 Had drawn herself from many thousand
 years,
 And all the separate Edens of this earth,
 To centre in this place and time. I
 listen'd,
 And her words stole with most prevailing
 sweetness
 Into my heart, as thronging fancies come
 To boys and girls when summer days are
 new,
 And soul and heart and body are all at
 ease :
 What marvel my Camilla told me all ?
 It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,
 And I was as the brother of her blood,
 And by that name I moved upon her
 breath ;
 Dear name, which had too much of near-
 ness in it
 And heralded the distance of this time !
 At first her voice was very sweet and low,
 As if she were afraid of utterance ;
 But in the onward current of her speech,
 (As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks
 Are fashion'd by the channel which they
 keep),
 Her words did of their meaning borrow
 sound,
 Her cheek did catch the colour of her
 words.
 I heard and trembled, yet I could but
 hear ;
 My heart paused—my raised eyelids
 would not fall,
 But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.

I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things ;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear
Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to
speak :

But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—
'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.' Even
then the stars

Did tremble in their stations as I gazed ;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly
dead,

But breathing hard at the approach of
Death,—

Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine—
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as
king.

There, where that day I crown'd myself
as king.

There in my realm and seat on my
throne,

Another! then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost
frame

Was riven in twain : that life I heerd not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the
grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision ; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawn-
ing cloven
With such a sound as when an iceberg
splits

From east to west—had Heaven from
all her doors,

With all her golden thresholds affording
room

Her heavens thence—I had lain as
dead,

Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay,
Dead, for henceforth there was no life
for me !

None, but *immediately* what one warm
wink to me !

Blind, for the day was as the night to
me !

The night to me was kinder than the
day ;

The night to pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light ;
And thus the happy notice of the ear

Full life was started from the tender
love

Of him she loved so true— Would I had
lain

Until the plaited ivy-tresse had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the cold brist
had driven

Its knotted thorns thro' my remaining
hairs,

Leaving its cross on my blind eyes.

The wind had blown above me, and the
rains

Had fall'n upon me, and the ground under
Had soaked in that inundation of
Love.

But I had been so long in pain—

Long time measurement (65) line— All
the same

L. 2. (66) a sweetest too delicious friend,
Who will not how account, with and with
With grader of twisted to survive
Entering all the azure of some
That start into his mind, the brain,

With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
 And first the chillness of the sprinkled
 brook
 Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd
 to hear
 Its murmur, as the drowning seaman
 hears,
 Who with his head below the surface
 dropt
 Listens the muffled booming indistinct
 Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
 His head shall rise no more: and then
 came in
 The white light of the weary moon above,
 Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
 Was my sight drunk that it did shape to
 me
 Him who should own that name? Were
 it not well
 If so be that the echo of that name
 Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
 A fashion and a phantasm of the form
 It should attach to? Phantom! had
 the ghastliest
 That ever lusted for a body, sucking
 The foul steam of the grave to thicken
 by it,
 There in the shuddering moonlight
 brought its face
 And what it has for eyes as close to
 mine
 As he did—better that than his, than he
 The friend, the neighbour, Lionel, the
 beloved,
 The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
 The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
 All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
 O how her choice did leap forth from his
 eyes!
 O how her love did clothe itself in
 smiles
 About his lips! and—not one moment's
 grace

Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon
 my head
 To come my way! to twit me with the
 cause!
 Was not the land as free thro' all her
 ways
 To him as me? Was not his wont to
 walk
 Between the going light and growing
 night?
 Had I not learnt my loss before he came?
 Could that be more because he came my
 way?
 Why should he not come my way if he
 would?
 And yet to-night, to-night—when all my
 wealth
 Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
 Beggar'd for ever—why *should* he come
 my way
 Robed in those robes of light I must not
 wear,
 With that great crown of beams about his
 brows—
 Come like an angel to a damned soul,
 To tell him of the bliss he had with
 God—
 Come like a careless and a greedy heir
 That scarce can wait the reading of the
 will
 Before he takes possession? Was mine
 a mood
 To be invaded rudely, and not rather
 A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
 Unspeakable? I was shut up with
 Grief;
 She took the body of my past delight,
 Narded and swathed and balm'd it for
 herself,
 And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
 Never to rise again. I was led mute
 Into her temple like a sacrifice;

I was the High Priest in her holiest
 place,
 Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy as
 these well-nigh
 O'erbore the limits of my brain : but he
 bent o'er me, and my neck his arm up-
 stay'd.
 I thought it was an adder's fold, and once
 I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
 Being so feeble : she bent above me, too ;
 Wan was her cheek ; for whatso'er of
 blight
 Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made
 The red rose there a pale one—and her
 eyes—
 I saw the moonlight glitter on their
 tears—
 And some few drops of that distressful
 rain
 Fell on my face, and her long ringlets
 moved,
 Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and
 trembl'd
 My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
 For in the sudden anguish of her heart
 Loosed from their simple thrall they had
 crowd'd through,
 And floated on and parted round her neck,
 Mantling her form halfway. She, when
 I woke,
 Something she ask'd, I know not what,
 and ask'd,
 Unanswer'd, since I spake not ; for the
 sound
 Of that dear voice so musically low,
 And now first heard with any sense of
 pain,
 As it had taken life away before,
 Choked all the syllables, that strove to
 rise
 From my full heart.

The faithful lover, too,
 From his great heart of happiness dis-
 fill'd
 Some drops of colour'd life—vain rich
 man
 That, having always prosper'd in the
 world,
 Feeling his home, death comfortable
 was
 To hearts wounded for ever ; yet, in
 truth,
 Fair spirit was his and delicate of
 phrase,
 Talking in whispers on the same,
 acres'd
 More to the inward than the outward
 eye,
 As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
 Sorrow-laden, recalling fragrance and the
 green
 Of the cool spring : but mine was wholly
 dead,
 No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for
 me,
 Yet who had none, or who had suffer'd
 wrong ?
 And why was I to darken their pure love,
 If, as I found, they two did love each
 other,
 Because my own was darken'd ? Why
 was I
 To cross between their happy pair and
 them ?
 To stand a shadow by their shining doors,
 And vex them with my darkness ? Did
 I hurt her ?
 We know that I did love her ; to this
 present
 My full soul (ows her sacred rest. Did
 I love her,
 And could I look upon her fearful eyes ?
 What had she done to weep ? Why
 should she weep ?

O innocent of spirit—let my heart
 Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of
 Heaven
 Should kiss with an unwonted gentle-
 ness.
 Her love did murder mine? What then?
 She deem'd
 I wore a brother's mind: she call'd me
 brother:
 She told me all her love: she shall not
 weep.

The brightness of a burning thought,
 awhile
 In battle with the glooms of my dark
 will,
 Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up
 There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe
 Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
 As from a dismal dream of my own death,
 I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love;
 I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she
 lov'd.
 And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
 Thro' the blank night to Him who loving
 made
 The happy and the unhappy love, that
 He
 Would hold the hand of blessing over
 them,
 Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his
 bride!
 Let them so love that men and boys may
 say,
 'Lo! how they love each other!' till
 their love
 Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
 Known, when their faces are forgot in
 the land
 One golden dream of love, from which
 may death
 Awake them with heaven's music in a
 life

More living to some happier happiness,
 Swallowing its precedent in victory.
 And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—
 The dew of tears is an unwholesome
 dew,
 They will but sicken the sick plant the
 more.
 Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
 So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;
 Or if thou dream aught farther, dream
 but how
 I could have loved thee, had there been
 none else
 To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I
 spake,
 When I beheld her weep so ruefully;
 For sure my love should ne'er indue the
 front
 And mask of Hate, who lives on others'
 moans.
 Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter
 draughts,
 And batten on her poisons? Love for-
 bid!
 Love passeth not the threshold of cold
 Hate,
 And Hate is strange beneath the roof of
 Love.
 O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these
 tears
 Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine
 image
 The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
 Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the
 source
 Of these sad tears, and feeds their down-
 ward flow.
 So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to
 death,
 Received unto himself a part of blame,
 Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,

Who, when the woful sentence hath been
past,

And all the clearness of his form hath
gone

Beneath the shadow of the curse of men,
First falls asleep in swoon, whereto
awaked,

And looking round upon his fearful
friends,

Forthwith and in his agony conceives
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—
For whence without some guilt should
such grief be ?

So died that hour, and fell into the
abyss

Of forms outworn, but not to me out-
worn,

Who never hail'd another—was there
one ?

There might be one—one other, worth
the life

That made it sensible. So that hour
died

Like odour rapt into the winged wind
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built,
that they,

They—when their love is wreck'd—if
Love can wreck—

On that sharp ridge of utmost doom, ride
highly

Above the perilous seas of Change and
Chance ;

Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheer-
fulness ;

As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
Knit to some dismal sandbank far at
sea,

All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous
wave.

For me—what light, what pleasure in
dark ways

Where Love could walk with honest
Hope—

It was thine in part, your beauty
fair ;

Love's arms were wreath'd about the
neck of Hope,

And Hope his'd Love, and Love drew
in her breath

In that close kiss, and drank her
whisper'd tales.

They said that Love would die when
Hope was gone,

And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd
after Hope ;

At last she sought out Memory, and they
met.

The same old paths where Love had
walk'd with Hope,

And Memory laid the soul of Love with
tears.

II.

From that time forth I would not be
more :

But many weary years I lived alone—
Alone, and in the lea of the great
farm.

Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
All day I watch'd the floating flocks of
clouds.

And sometimes on the shore upon the
sands.

Insensibly I drew far from, into
The meeting of the waves—the sea—

My brain; among the wondrous billow
wash'd

These eyes; all that I felt like my loss—
The hollow—cover'd head—my—my
break.

Of the midforest heard me—the soft
winds,
Laden with thistledown and seed of
flowers,
Paused in their course to hear me, for my
voice
Was all of thee : the merry linnet knew
me,
The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly
Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
The rough briar tore my bleeding palms ;
the hemlock,
Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I
past ;
Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,
Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end ?
Why grew we then together in one plot ?
Why fed we from one fountain ? drew
one sun ?
Why were our mothers' branches of one
stem ?
Why were we one in all things, save in
that
Where to have been one had been the
cope and crown
Of all I hoped and fear'd ?—if that same
nearness
Were father to this distance, and that
one
Vauncourier to this *double* ? if Affection
Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd
out
The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy ?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill
Where last we roam'd together, for the
sound
Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the
wind
Came wooingly with woodbine smells.
Sometimes

All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-
cones
That spired above the wood ; and with
mad hand
Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-
screen,
I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from
my sight
Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-
tines :
And all the fragments of the living rock
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling
of the world
Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they
fell
Half-digging their own graves) these in
my agony
Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the
spring
Had liveried them all over. In my
brain
The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to
thought,
As moonlight wandering thro' a mist : my
blood
Crept like marsh drains thro' all my lan-
guid limbs ;
The motions of my heart seem'd far
within me,
Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses ;
And yet it shook me, that my frame
would shudder,
As if 'twere drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and
Fear,
And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-
shock'd, =

Hung round with ragged fens and burning
folds,—

Embracing all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collaps'd masses
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous
light—

Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me !

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no
more,

Some one had told she was dead, and
ask'd me

If I would see her burial : then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow
borne

With more than mortal swiftness, I ran
down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay : in front of which
Saw stately virgins, all in white, upbore
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest
lawn,

Wreath'd round the base with garlands :
in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the
hill

Look'd forth the summit and the pinna-
cles

Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,

Saw these six virgins which upheld the
bier,

Were stoled from head to foot in flowing
black ;

One walk'd abreast with me, and walk'd
his brow,

And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her, we follow'd : a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul : I flung myself upon
him

In tears and cries : I told him all my love,

How I had loved her from the first :
she knew

He struck and knock'd, and from his brow
Droop'd blood,

His hand to push me from him, and the
flame,

The very spectral form of Love !

Think't that my eyes were my torment
bra n,

And as his feet I seemed to kick and fill,
To fall and die away. I would not see
About I strove to follow. They past on,
The lordly Phantoms ! in their floating
fields.

They past and were no more : but I had
fallen

From by the dusky round of the green
grove

Along the lamplike avenue through
Artichoke and asparagus,
Strayed by the rubicund red-winter,
Moulded the pollen and vesicle ;

All striped sunset of sweet heat and hot
wind,

Flatter'd the bosom of my halting brain ;
The Eusebythian shames, the mood,
The mummies, the three pyramids, the
saw

Strove, across glows and glances of the
saw

Below blood and above silver-sweeping
saw

Look'd the long signs to silver-mould and
saw,

Was wrought into the bones of my
dream !

The morning on the lawn the land
brook,

And on the porch of the old key

I lay in a look, and when and then
hallucinate

Across the lawn the saw a part of sleep,
And when in the dream-sawing to me

And in my vision bidding me dream on,
 Like sounds without the twilight realm
 of dreams,
 Which wander round the bases of the
 hills,
 And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of
 sleep,
 Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
 The vision had fair prelude, in the end
 Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
 To caves and shows of Death: whether
 the mind,
 With some revenge—even to itself un-
 known,—
 Made strange division of its suffering
 With her, whom to have suffering view'd
 had been
 Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed
 Spirit,
 Being blunted in the Present, grew at
 length
 Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
 The Future had in store: or that which
 most
 Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
 Was of so wide a compass it took in
 All I had loved, and my dull agony,
 Ideally to her transferr'd, became
 Anguish intolerable.

The day waned ;

Alone I sat with her : about my brow
 Her warm breath floated in the utterance
 Of silver-chorded tones : her lips were
 sunder'd
 With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke
 in light
 Like morning from her eyes—her elo-
 quent eyes,
 (As I have seen them many a hundred
 times)
 Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine
 own kind

Their spirit-searching splendours. As a
 vision
 Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
 In damp and dismal dungeons under-
 ground,
 Confined on points of faith, when strength
 is shock'd
 With torment, and expectancy of worse
 Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
 All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
 Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
 And with the excess of sweetness and of
 awe,
 Makes the heart tremble, and the sight
 run over
 Upon his steely gyves; so those fair
 eyes
 Shone on my darkness, forms which ever
 stood
 Within the magic cirque of memory,
 Invisible but deathless, waiting still
 The edict of the will to reassume
 The semblance of those rare realities
 Of which they were the mirrors. Now
 the light
 Which was their life, burst through the
 cloud of thought
 Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room

Within the summer-house of which I
 spake,
 Hung round with paintings of the sea,
 and one
 A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
 Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin
 wind
 In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
 Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
 And solid beam of isolated light,
 Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
 Slanting upon that picture, from prime
 youth

Well-known well-loved. She drew it
long ago—

Fasthazing on the waves and open sea,
One morning when the upblown billow
ran

Shoreward beneath our death, and I had
pour'd

Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms
Colour and life : it was a hand and soul
Of friendship, spoken of with joyful
smiles ;

A monument of childhood and of love ;
The poesy of childhood ; my lost love
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it
together

In mute and glad remembrance, and
each heart

Grew closer to the other, and the eye
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-
couch'd—

A beauty which is death ; when all at
once

That painted vessel, as with inner life,
Began to heave upon that painted sea ;
An earthquake, my heart beat-beats
made the ground

Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
And breath and motion, (you and flow'd)
away

To those unreal billows ; round and
round

A whirlwind caught and bore us ; mighty
gyres

Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-
driven

Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she
shriek'd ;

My heart was cloven with pain ; I wrung
my arms

About her : we whirl'd giddily ; the wind
Sung ; but I clasped her without fear :
her weight

Shriek'd on my grief, nor ever my arms
gave,

And parted lips which found her beauty
drown'd hung

The love of death : I, gazing, loam
my being

Her empty phantoms ; all the way and
wind

Of the crimson spray and bloodshot, and I
Drown wait'd thro' the dark year and
year.

III.

I DAME her, my and me among the waves—
Strewn in the entry of the mountain cove ;
A morning air, sweet since you, ran over
The rippling level of the lake, and blew
Cresses, red morning, and all smells of
land

And foliage were the dark and dripping
woods

Upon my lover's brow that shone and
shin'd'd

From temple zone temple. To what
height

The day had grown I know not. Thus
laid on me

The hollow setting of the bell, and all
The value of the life. As heretofore

I walk'd behind with one who pass'd for
free.

Marking her slow degrees the valley hall
Till'd spickay, and on benches on the
door

stept (she could not) ; then the word
with me,

And those that hold the line before my
face

Stared with one spite toward about the
day,

That neither says ; and while I wait'd
with them

In marvel at that gradual change, I
 thought
 Four bells instead of one began to ring,
 Four merry bells, four merry marriage-
 bells,
 In clanging cadence jangling peal on
 peal—
 A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.
 Then those who led the van, and those
 in rear,
 Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bac-
 chanals
 Fled onward to the steeple in the woods :
 I, too, was borne along and felt the
 blast
 Beat on my heated eyelids : all at once
 The front rank made a sudden halt ; the
 bells
 Lapsed into frightful stillness ; the surge
 fell
 From thunder into whispers ; those six
 maids
 With shrieks and ringing laughter on the
 sand
 Threw down the bier ; the woods upon
 the hill
 Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping
 down
 Took the edges of the pall, and blew it
 far
 Until it hung, a little silver cloud
 Over the sounding seas : I turn'd : my
 heart
 Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the
 hand,
 Waiting to see the settled countenance
 Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading
 flowers.
 But she from out her death-like chrysalis,
 She from her bier, as into fresher life,
 My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
 Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her
 hair

Studded with one rich Provence rose—a
 light
 Of smiling welcome round her lips—her
 eyes
 And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd
 the hill.
 One hand she reach'd to those that came
 behind,
 And while I mused nor yet endured to
 take
 So rich a prize, the man who stood with
 me
 Stept gaily forward, throwing down his
 robes,
 And claspt her hand in his : again the
 bells
 Jangled and clang'd : again the stormy
 surf
 Crash'd in the shingle : and the whirling
 rout
 Led by those two rush'd into dance, and
 fled
 Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
 Till they were swallow'd in the leafy
 bowers,
 And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

 There, there, my latest vision—then the
 event !

IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(Another speaks.)

HE flies the event : he leaves the event
 to me :
 Poor Julian—how he rush'd away ; the
 bells,
 Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and
 heart
 But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
 As who should say 'Continue.' Well he
 had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I
say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour
of his!

He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—
but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-
bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and on Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains
and the Bay,

The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ætna does

The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had
gone

Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning—sent divinely—as it
seem'd

By that which follow'd—the one of this I
deem

As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it
not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look
at her—

No rest for months: but, when the
eleventh moon

After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and
said,

Would you could toll me out of life, but
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueler reason than a crueler one,
For that low knell waking his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without
a pulse:

All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.

And so they bury her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a funeral board up on a day,
Bore her free-faced to the free air of
heaven,

And laid her in the vault of her own land.

What did he then? inside, he is here
and here—

Not plunge headlong from the
mountain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Land
not he:

He knew the meaning of the whisper now—
Thought that he knew it—'This, I
say'd for this:

O love, I have not seen you for so long—
Now, now, will I go down into the
grave,

I will be all stars with all I love,
And lay her on the lips—She is to
be near:

The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead!

The fancy sto'd below
He rose and went, and entering the dim
vault,

And, walking there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will
be.

The light was *not* dead, and venturous—
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face;
Her hand as in a shadowy room, free
Of black and bands of silver, which the
moon

Struck from an open grating overhead
 High in the wall, and all the rest of her
 Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
 vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to
 sleep,
 To rest, to be with her—till the great
 day
 Peal'd on us with that music which rights
 all,
 And raised us hand in hand.' And
 kneeling there
 Down in the dreadful dust that once was
 man,
 Dust, as he said, that once was loving
 hearts,
 Hearts that had beat with such a love as
 mine—
 Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
 her—
 He softly put his arm about her neck
 And kissed her more than once, till help-
 less death
 And silence made him bold—nay, but I
 wrong him,
 He revered his dear lady even in
 death;
 But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
 'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not
 even death
 Can chill you all at once : ' then starting,
 thought
 His dreams had come again. 'Do I
 wake or sleep?
 Or am I made immortal, or my love
 Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart
 —it beat :
 Faint but it beat : at which his own
 began
 To pulse with such a vehemence that it
 drown'd
 The feebler motion underneath his hand.

But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
 He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
 And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
 He came in, and now striding fast, and
 now
 Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
 Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
 So bore her thro' the solitary land
 Back to the mother's house where she
 was born.

There the good mother's kindly
 ministering,
 With half a night's appliances, recall'd
 Her fluttering life : she rais'd an eye that
 ask'd
 'Where?' till the things familiar to her
 youth
 Had made a silent answer : then she
 spoke
 'Here! and how came I here?' and
 learning it
 (They told her somewhat rashly as I
 think)
 At once began to wander and to wail,
 'Ay, but you know that you must give
 me back :
 Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was
 away
 Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none
 knew where.
 'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'
 —a wail
 That seeming something, yet was nothing,
 born
 Not from believing mind, but shatter'd
 nerve,
 Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
 At some precipitance in her burial.
 Then, when her own true spirit had
 return'd,
 'O yes, and you,' she said, 'and none
 but you.'

For you have given me life and love
again,

And none but you yourself shall tell him
of it,

And you shall give me back when he
returns.

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian,
'here,

And keep yourself, none knowing, so
yourself;

And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of
him

When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you

To him you love.' And faintly she
replied,

'And I will do *your* will, and none shall
know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be
known.

But all their house was old and loved
them both;

And all the house had known the loves
of both;

Had glad aims to serve them any
way,

And all the land was waste and solitary:
And then he rode away; but after this,

An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his free and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him: myself was
then

Travelling that land, and meant to rest
an hour;

And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd

The mountain's crest for everything was
still;

And in a left, with none to wait but I,
Found, as it seemed, a station there,
Having at hand iron's dust and leading
here.

A sound found by a sound hand,
A hot water'd world of soul and soul?
But there you have your own of him
Spring on a narrative that may help us
you.

For while we roam'd along the dusty
road,

And waited for her message, (none by
mine)

I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And (had he lived) and known of Lionel
Found that the sudden wail had help'd
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her
worth,

Her destiny, could I should he not be
longer,

Ev'n by the paths that silver set upon it,
The voice of your jewel he had to guard?

Soothingly consider her rest and we part,
I still am heavy to his native day.

This looks at the dawn, the week the
end:

That makes the sequel part: the same
of us

Engaging it the good know to come
Not such on I: and yet I say, the first
That will not have my will, however
soon.

But in my thoughts would you
live—

What matter? there are what in the
world

Not when I saw her (and I thought him
good).

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
 A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
 hers—
 Oh ! such dark eyes ! and not her eyes
 alone,
 But all from these to where she touch'd
 on earth,
 For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
 No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
 To greet us, her young hero in her arms !
 ' Kiss him,' she said. ' You gave me
 life again.
 He, but for you, had never seen it once.
 His other father you ! Kiss him, and then
 Forget him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart !
 his own
 Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him
 there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
 And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
 By that great love they both had borne
 the dead,
 To come and revel for one hour with him
 Before he left the land for evermore ;
 And then to friends—they were not many
 —who lived
 Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
 And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I
 never
 Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall
 From column on to column, as in a wood,
 Not such as here—an equatorial one,
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd ;
 and beneath,
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,

Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
 knows when,
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten
 sun,
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of
 gloom,
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
 Where nymph and god ran ever round in
 gold—
 Others of glass as costly—some with
 gems
 Moveable and resettable at will,
 And trebling all the rest in value—Ah
 heavens !
 Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
 That whatsoever such a house as his,
 And his was old, has in it rare or fair
 Was brought before the guest : and they,
 the guests,
 Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's
 eyes
 (I told you that he had his golden hour),
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
 And that resolved self-exile from a land
 He never would revisit, such a feast
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
 than rich,
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the
 hall
 Two great funereal curtains, looping
 down,
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,
 About a picture of his lady, taken
 Some years before, and falling hid the
 frame,
 And just above the parting was a lamp :
 So the sweet figure folded round with
 night
 Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a
 smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate
and drank,

And might—the wines being of such
nobleness—

Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes.

And something weird and wild about it
all :

What was it ? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarcely touch'd the meats ; but ever and
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine—
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use :
And when the feast was near an end, he
said :

' There is a custom in the Orient,
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom——'

Passing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with
meeting hands

And cries about the banquet : ' Beautiful !
Who could desire more beauty at a
feast ?'

The lover answer'd, ' There is none
than one

Here sitting who desires it. Laid my rest
Before my time, but hear me to the end.
This custom steps yet further when the
guest

Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich
guise

That which is thrice as beautiful as these.

The beauty that is dearest to his heart—

" O my heart's love, would I could show
you," he says,

" Let's my heart see." And I propose to-
night

To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

' But when can that be done ?

I knew a man, not many years ago :

He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth be-
side.

He falling sick, and warning close to
death,

His master would not wait until he died,
But bade his menials bear him from the
door,

And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago.

Wine found the dying servant took him
home,

And fed and cherish'd him, and nurs'd
his life.

I ask you now, should the first master
claim

His servant, whose love of him belong to
him

Who found him sick, or him who nurs'd
his life ?

This question, as long show'd before
the guests,

And balanced either way by each at
length

When some were doubtful how the new
would hold.

Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had no quarrel, I said,

For justice was his, and ultimate of
phases.

And he laughing hospitably said,

Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he
 went,
 Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
 Affirming that as long as either lived,
 By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
 The service of the one so saved was due
 All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
 The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
 As at a strong conclusion—‘body and
 soul
 And life and limbs, all his to work his
 will.’

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
 To bring Camilla down before them all.
 And crossing her own picture as she
 came,
 And looking as much lovelier as herself
 Is lovelier than all others—on her head
 A diamond circlet, and from under this
 A veil, that seemed no more than gilded
 air,
 Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
 With seeds of gold—so, with that grace
 of hers,
 Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
 That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
 And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
 The younger Julian, who himself was
 crown'd
 With roses, none so rosy as himself
 And over all her babe and her the jewels
 Of many generations of his house
 Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked
 them out
 As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
 So she came in :—I am long in telling it,
 I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
 Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated
 in
 While all the guests in mute amazement
 rose—
 And slowly pacing to the middle hall,

Before the board, there paused and
 stood, her breast
 Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her
 feet,
 Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
 But him she carried, him nor lights nor
 feast
 Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ; who
 cared
 Only to use his own, and staring wide
 And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd
 world
 About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
 When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

‘My guests,’ said Julian : ‘you are
 honour'd now
 Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold
 Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
 Of all things upon earth the dearest to
 me.’
 Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
 Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
 And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
 Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
 Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
 And heard him muttering, ‘So like, so
 like ;
 She never had a sister. I knew none.
 Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so
 like !’
 And then he suddenly ask'd her if she
 were.
 She shook, and cast her eyes down, and
 was dumb.
 And then some other question'd if she
 came
 From foreign lands, and still she did not
 speak.
 Another, if the boy were hers : but she
 To all their queries answer'd not a word,
 Which made the amazement more, till
 one of them

Said, shuddering: 'Her spectre! — But
his friend

Replied, in half a whisper: 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I Almost dead to feel her,
dumb!'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all:
'She is but dumb, because in her you
see
That faithful servant whom we spoil
about.

Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have here to-
night a guest
So bound to me by common love and
loss—

What! shall I bind him more? in his
behalf.
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to
me,
Not only showing? and he himself pro-
nounced
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of
you
Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my
heart.'
And then began the story of his love.
As here to-day, but not so wordily
The passionate moment would not suffer
that—
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his
hall;
And then rose up, and with him all his
guests
Once more as by enchantment; all but
he.

Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in a trance: (When heard)

'Take my free gift, my counsel, to
your wife;
And were it only for her given's sake,
And tho' she seem not like the one you
love,
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be some fit time to bring her
back:
I leave this land for ever.' Then he
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one
hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel:
And there the widower husband and dumb
wife
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather
—
For some new death (tho' for a time re-
new'd;
Whereat the very babe began to wail;
At once they rush'd and caught and
brought him in
To their throats (tho' not, forbidding
him
With kisses, court'hip, and many
—
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and stood up a free
All over glowing with the use of life,
And love, and boundless thanks, the
right of this
So frighted so good Lionel, that turning
to see
And saying: 'It is gone, bid us go'—
There were not horses ready at the
door—
We take them as best we can, but mounting
—

He past for ever from his native land ;
And I with him, my Julian, back to
mine.

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure
it 'll all come right,'
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks
so wan an' so white :
Wait ! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't to
wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No,
no, you are doing me wrong !
Harry and I were married : the boy can
hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after
my man was dead ;
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I
work an' I wait to the end.
I am all alone in the world, an' you are
my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the
tale o' my life.
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd
me his own little wife ;
I was happy when I was with him, an'
sorry when he was away,
An' when we play'd together, I loved him
better than play ;
He workt me the daisy chain - he made
me the cowslip ball,
He fought the boys that were rude an' I
loved him better than all.
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at
home in disgrace,

I never could quarrel with Harry—I had
but to look in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's
kin, that had need
Of a good stout lad at his farm ; he sent,
an' the father agreed ;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire
farm for years an' for years ;
I walked with him down to the quay,
poor lad, an' we parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we
heard them a-ringing the bell,
'I'll never love any but you, God bless
you, my own little Nell.'

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he
came to harm ;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with
him up at the farm,
One had deceived her an' left her alone
with her sin an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry ; the
girl was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was little
had grown so tall,
The men would say of the maids 'Our
Nelly's the flower of 'em all.'
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught
myself all I could
To make a good wife for Harry, when
Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as
happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll
never love any but you ;'

'I'll never love any but you' the morning
song of the lark.

'I'll never love any but you' the night-
gale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he
look'd at me sidelong and shy,

Vext me a bit, till he told me that so
many years had gone by,

I had grown so handsome and tall—that
I might ha' forgot him somehow—

For he thought—there were other lads—
he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were
married o' Christmas day,

Married among the red berries, an' all as
merry as May—

Those were the pleasant times, my house
an' my man were my pride,

We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-
sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was soon in the Lido, till he
tried the villages round,

So Harry went over the Solent to see if
work could be found;

An' he wrote 'I ha' no work, work,
little wife, so far as I know;

I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss
you before I go.'

X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't
he coming that day?

An' I put on an old dead-box that was
push'd in a corner away,

It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a
letter along wi' the rest.

I had better ha' put my naked hand in a
hornets' nest.

XI.

Sweetheart's—this was the letter—this
was the letter I read—

'You promised to find me work near you,
an' I wish I was dead—

Don't you kiss me an' pretend you
haven't done it, my lad,

An' I almost died o' your going away,
an' I wish that I had.'

XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant
times that had past.

Before I quarrell'd with Harry—my
quarrel—the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry gave me, an' I flung him the
letter that drove me wild,

An' he told it me all at once, so simple as
any child,

'What can it matter, my lass, what I did
an' my single bed?

I ha' been as true before as ever I meant
to be with:

An' she wasn't one o' the worst.' 'Then,'
I said, 'I'm sure o' the best.'

'No' he smiled at me: 'An' you, my
love? Come, come, little wife, let
it rest!

The man he's like the water, no need to
make such a stir.'

But he smil'd me all the more, an' I said
'You were laughing with her,

When I was a having you all along an' the
same as before.'

An' he smil'd to look for a while, an' he
smil'd me more and more.

Then he put his hand in his gentle
way: 'Let bygones be!

Bygone's you need never brood, I said,
when you married me:

By gone's he comes again: an' she
in her shame an' her sin—

You'll have her to nurse my child, if I
die o' my lying in !
You'll make her its second mother ! I hate
her—an' I hate you !'
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha'
beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did,
when I were so crazy wi' spite,
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all
come right.'

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I
watch'd him, an' when he came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was all
wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said 'off wi' the wet,' I never
said 'on wi' the dry,'
So I knew my heart was hard, when he
came to bid me goodbye.
'You said that you hated me, Ellen, but
that isn't true, you know ;
I am going to leave you a bit—you'll kiss
me before I go ?'

XV.

'Going ! you're going to her—kiss her
if you will,' I said,—
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must
ha' been light i' my head
'I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd !'— I
didn't know well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he
turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, 'I've gotten
my work to do ;
You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I
never loved any but you ;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for
what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-
night by the boat.'

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought
of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame ; he was
always kind to me.
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all
come right'—
An' the boat went down that night—the
boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

I.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind
over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother,
come out to me.'
Why should he call me to-night, when he
knows that I cannot go ?
For the downs are as bright as day, and
the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear ; they would
spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the
storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am
led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I
find myself drenched with the rain.

III.

Anything fallen again ? nay what was
there left to fall ?
I have taken them home, I have number'd
the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying ? and what are *you* ?
do you come as a spy ?
Falls ? what falls ? who knows ? As the
tree falls so must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been?
you—what have you heard?

Why did you sit so quiet? you never have
spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none
of their spies—

But the night has crept into my heart,
and began to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what
should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the
bitter frost and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep—
you were only made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and
now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, do sit
by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have
only an hour of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he
went out to die.

'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he
never has told me a lie.

I whipt him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child.

'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said;
he was always so wild—

And idle—and couldn't be idle—my
Willy—he never could rest.

The King should have made him a soldier,
he would have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and
they never would let him be good;

They swore that he dare not rob the
mail, and he swore that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one
pound, and when all was done
He hang'd it among his fellows—I'll never
of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came next to the judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth—but they kill'd him;
they kill'd him for robbing the mail.

They hang'd him in chains for a show—
we had always a better good name—

To be hang'd for a thief—and then put
away—isn't that enough shame?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide!
but they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could
stare at him, passing by.

God'll pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who
kill'd him and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer found me away. I had
told him my last goodbye;

They had fasten'd the door of his cell,
'O mother!' I heard him cry,

I couldn't get back tho' I think he had
something further to say,

And now I never shall know it. The
jailer found me away.

X.

Then some I couldn't but hear that cry
of my boy that was dead,

They seized me and shut me up: they
fasten'd me down on my bed.

'O mother, O mother!'—he call'd in the
dark to me year after year—

They beat me for that, they beat me—
you know that I couldn't but hear;

And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again but the
creatures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of
my bone was left—
I stole them all from the lawyers—and
you, will you call it a theft?—
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the
bones that had laughed and had
cried—
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not
theirs—they had moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all!
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night
by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'ill sound
But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—
let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
good will toward men
'Full of compassion and mercy, the
Lord'—let me hear it again;
'Full of compassion and mercy—long-
suffering.' Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder
the Saviour lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap except
for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last—I have heard it
in church—and the last may be first.

Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the
Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind
and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told
you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his
mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the
storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and
the sea that 'ill moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's
all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall
not find him in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the
Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me I'm sure to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if
my boy be gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark—go,
go, you may leave me alone—
You never have borne a child—you are
just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think
that you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind—
The snow and the sky so bright—he used
but to call in the dark,

Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv
me to drink the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,
wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur'id,
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde,
and I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull
gotten loose at a faäir,
An' she wur a-wääitin' fo'mma, an'
cryin' and teärin' 'er 'aäir,
An' I tumbled athurt the craädle an'
sweär'd as I'd breäk ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied
our Sally a kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an'
she an' the babby beäl'd.¹
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor
a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I wääked i' the murnin' I seeäd
that our Sally went laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied er, an' I wur
dreädful ashaämed ;
An' Sally wur sloomy² an' draggle-taäil'd
in an owd turn gown,
An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an'
the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty
an' neät an sweeät,
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro'
'eäd to feeät :
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied
'er by Thursby thurn ;
Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a
Sunday at murn,

¹ Bellowed, cried out.² Sluggish, out of spirit.

Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin'
oop 'igher an' 'igher,
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e
shined like a sparkle o' fire.
' Doesn't tha see 'im,' she axes, ' fur I
can see 'im ? ' an I
Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as
danced in 'er pratty blue eye ;
An' I says ' I mun gie tha a kiss,' an'
Sally says ' Noä, thou moänt,'
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother,
an' Sally says ' doänt !'

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at
fust she wur all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn together
like birds on a beugh ;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an'
the loov o' God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied
me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like
Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw
theer's naw drinkin' i' Hell ;
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wof
fro' the dcor,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er
as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd
awaäy o' the bed—
' Weänt niver do it naw moor ; ' an'
Sally loökt up an' she said,
' I'll upowd it ! ' tha weänt ; thou'rt laike
the rest o' the men,
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha
does it agäan.

¹ I'll uphold it.

Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws,
as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha sees 'im an' smells 'im thro' th'
foller 'im slick into Hell!

XII.

'Naay,' says I, 'fur I weant god sniffin'
about the tap.'
'Weant tha?' she says, an' mysen I
thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.'
'Noa : ' an' I started awaäy like a shot,
an' down to the Hinn,
An' I browt what tha sees stannin' theer,
yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

'That caps owt,'¹ says Sally, an' saw she
begins to cry,
But I puts it inter 'er 'onds an' I says to
'er, 'Sally,' says I,
'Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord
an' the power o' 'is Graäce,
Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll loök my hennemy
stran i' the faace.
Stan' 'im theer i' the woader, an' let 'im
looök at 'im then,
'E seems naw moor red water, an' 'is
the Devil's oän sen.'

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't do
naw work an' all,
Nasty an' snaggy an' sleeky, an' pounth'²
my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coocufu, an'
sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
An' coäxl an' coodled me oop till agoon
I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk
stood a-gawmin'² in,

¹ That's beyond everything.

² Staring vacantly.

As thou o' war minna! lewdly'st head
(f' a quart o' gin ;
An' hant on' on' and o' wad water—an'
I wur dressed' the wad,
For I couldn't lewd' and o' gin, wur o'
addit to save my life ;
An' 'blacksmith's' strips me the thick ov'
'is arm, an' 'e shows it to me,
'Foold thou this! thou can't grow this
god' water!' says he.
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as
candles was lit,
'Thou must do it,' he says 'the nun
break 'im off bit by bit.'
'Thou'rt bin a Methody man,' says Par-
son, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I
respects tha fur that ;'
An' Squire, 'is can very soon walks down
fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spunks 'is 'and into mine, 'for I
respects tha,' says 'e ;
An' custom agoon draw'd in like a wind
thro' 'er an' wife,
And browt me the horse to be cobbled
fro' both the coocufu's.

XVI.

An' alive 'e stax an' flow 'e shall see
on my dying day ;
I 's gotten to leav 'im agoon in another
kind o' a way,
Fruel on 'im, 'his, my 'ad, an' 'e keeps
'e shining an' bright,
Leave 'e, an' make 'im, an' 'is 'im,
an' gets 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Wretched 'e got a' served so well as a
man! Now don't
But I shall a bigger biller to fight wi' an'
that 'e can.

Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I
 cared to taäste,
 But I moant, my lad, and I weänt, fur
 I'd feäl mysen cleän disgräced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass,
 when I cooms to die,
 Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil's
 in 'im,' said I.
 But arter I chänged my mind, an' if
 Sally be left aloän,
 I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke
 'im afoor the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon laädy a-steppin'
 along the streëät,
 Doesn't tha know 'er sa pratty, an' feüt,
 an' neät, an' sweëät?
 Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe
 ammost spick-span-new,
 An' Tommy's faäce is as fresh as a codlin
 'at's wesh'd i' the dew.

XX.

'Ere's our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be
 a-goin to dine,
 Bäacon an' taätes, an' a beslings-pud-
 din'! an' Adam's wine;
 But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä
 fur it down to the Hinn,
 Fur I weänt shet a drop on 'is blood,
 noa, not fur Sally's oän kin.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard
 Grenville lay,
 And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came
 flying from far away:

¹ A puddling made with the first milk of the cow
 after calving.

'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have
 sighted fifty-three!'

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard:
 'Fore God I am no coward;
 But I cannot meet them here, for my
 ships are out of gear,
 And the half my men are sick. I must
 fly, but follow quick.
 We are six ships of the line; can we
 fight with fifty-three?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I
 know you are no coward;
 You fly them for a moment to fight with
 them again.
 But I've ninety men and more that are
 lying sick ashore.
 I should count myself the coward if I left
 them, my Lord Howard,
 To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-
 doms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five
 ships of war that day,
 Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
 summer heaven;
 But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick
 men from the land
 Very carefully and slow,
 Men of Bideford in Devon,
 And we laid them on the ballast down
 below;
 For we brought them all aboard,
 And they blest him in their pain, that they
 were not left to Spain,
 To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the
 glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work
 the ship and to fight,
 And he sailed away from Flores till the
 Spaniard came in sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon
the weather bow.

'Shall we fight or shall we fly?

Good Sir Richard, tell us now,

For to fight is but to die :

There'll be little of us left by the time
this sun be set.'

And Sir Richard said again : ' We be all
good English men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
children of the devil,

For I never turn'd my back upon Don or
devil yet.'

v.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and
we roar'd a hurrah, and so

The little Revenge ran on sheer into the
heart of the foe,

With her hundred fighters on deck, and
her ninety sick below ;

For half of their fleet to the right and
half to the left were seen,

And the little Revenge ran on thro' the
long sea-lane between.

vi.

Thousanis of their soldiers look'd down
from their decks and laugh'd,

Thousands of their seamen made mock at
the mad little craft

Running on and on, till delay'd

By their mountain-like San Philip that,
of fifteen hundred tons,

And up-shadowing high above us with
her yawning tiers of guns,

Took the breath from our sails, and we
stay'd.

vii.

And while now the great San Philip hung
above us like a cloud

Whence the thunderbolt will fall

Long and loud,

Four galleons drew away

From the Spanish fleet the day,

And two upon the harbour and two upon
the southern bay,

And the bathurstuneter broke from them
all.

viii.

But anon the great San Philip, the bat-
hurstuneter herself and went

Having that within her womb that had left
her ill content ;

And the rest they came aboard us, and
they fought us hand to hand,

For a dozen times they came with their
pikes and musqueteers,

And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a
dog that shakes his ears

When he leaps from the water to the land,

ix.

And the sun went down, and the stars
came out far over the summer sea,

But never a moment ceased the fight of
the sea and the fury-three.

Ship after ship, the whole night long,
their light hulls galleons came,

Ship after ship, the whole night long,
with her battle-hermia and flame ;

Ship after ship, the whole night long, dew
land with her land and her dame,

For some were sunk and many were shat-
ter'd, and several high and more

God of battles, was ever a battle like this
in the world before ?

x.

For he said : Fight on ! fight on !

Thou' his vessel was all but a wreck ;

And it chanced that, when half of the
short summer night was gone,

With a grievous wound to be done he had
left the deck,

But a holeer woun him that was dressing
it suddenly dead,

And himself he was wounded again in the
side and the head,
And he said 'Fight on ! fight on !'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun
smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides
lay round us all in a ring ;
But they dared not touch us again, for
they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the
desperate strife ;
And the sick men down in the hold were
most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent,
and the powder was all of it spent ;
And the masts and the rigging were
lying over the side ;
But Sir Richard cried in his English
pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day
and a night
As may never be fought again !
We have won great glory, my men !
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when ?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink
her, split her in twain !
Fall into the hands of God, not into the
hands of Spain !'

XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the
seamen made reply :
We have children, we have wives,

And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if
we yield, to let us go ;
We shall live to fight again and to strike
another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they
yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their
flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old
Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with
their courtly foreign grace ;
But he rose upon their decks, and he
cried :
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like
a valiant man and true ;
I have only done my duty as a man is
bound to do :
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-
ville die !'
And he fell upon their decks, and he
died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had
been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of
Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship
and his English few ;
Was he devil or man ? He was devil
for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honour down
into the deep,
And they mann'd the Revenge with a
swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and
long'd for her own ;
When a wind from the lands they had
ruin'd awoke from sleep,

And the water began to heave and the
weather to moan,
And ere ever that evening ended a great
gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised
by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails
and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down
by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar; and by
their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the
song,
Their favourite which I call 'The
Tables Turned.'
Evelyn begins it 'O diviner Air.'

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the
glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing
showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that—you scarce could
better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with
night,

Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding
showers,
Far from out a sky by over bright,
Over all the woodland's flowered bowers,
Over all the meadow's dawning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light!

Marvellously like, their Voices—and
themselves?
The one is somewhat looser than the
other,
As one is somewhat graver than the
other—
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle,
whom
You count the father of your fortune,
longs
For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do
not doubt
Being a wretched parent, you are taken
With one or other; that assurance I
fear
You may be doubting, hovering in a
doubt
Between the two, which must not be—
which might
Be best to one: they both are beautiful;
Evelyn is gay, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it:
—she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Winter her and give her then: no waver
—my boy?
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh usually are so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likeness.

NEITHER ever praised each other more.
NOT so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.

—But that my last

And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
 And that I know you worthy everyway
 To be my son, I might, perchance, be
 loath
 To part them, or part from them : and
 yet one
 Should marry, or all the broad lands in
 your view
 From this bay window—which our house
 has held
 Three hundred years—will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,
 A hand upon the head of either child,
 Smoothing their locks, as golden as his
 own
 Were silver, 'get them wedded' would
 he say.
 And once my prattling Edith ask'd him
 'why?'
 Ay, why? said he, 'for why should I go
 lame?'
 Then told them of his wars, and of
 his wound.
 For see this wine the grape from
 whence it flow'd
 Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
 When that brave soldier, down the
 terrible ridge
 Plunged in the last fierce charge at
 Waterloo,
 And caught the laming bullet. He left
 me this,
 Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
 As I of mine, and my first passion.
 Come!
 Here's to your happy union with my
 child!

Yet must you change your name : no
 fault of mine!
 You say that you can do it as willingly

As birds make ready for their bridal-
 time
 By change of feather : for all that, my
 boy,
 Some birds are sick and sullen when they
 moult.
 An old and worthy name ! but mine that
 stirr'd
 Among our civil wars and earlier too
 Among the Roses, the more venerable.
 I care not for a name—no fault of mine.
 Once more—a happier marriage than my
 own !

You see yon Lombard poplar on the
 plain.
 The highway running by it leaves a
 breadth
 Of sward to left and right, where, long
 ago,
 One bright May morning in a world of
 song,
 I lay at leisure, watching overhead
 The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed ; I woke. An open landaulet
 Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me,
 show'd
 Turning my way, the loveliest face on
 earth.
 The face of one there sitting opposite,
 On whom I brought a strange unhappi-
 ness,
 That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
 May seem—with goodly rhyme and
 reason for it—
 Possible -- at first glimpse, and for a
 face
 Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once,
 when first
 I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,

A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and thro' I lightning there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face
for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here—the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment
make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown :
the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith—no the other—both indeed.

So that bright face was dash'd thro' sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd—to be from
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-towers, and those long-sweeping
beechen boughs
Of our New Forest. I was there alone :
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
For ever past me by: when one quick
peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering
glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face
again,
My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty,
happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing

There one of those about her knowing
me

Call'd me to join them; or with those I
stood
What were'd my crowding home, my day
of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
They were for her, for me I was I con-
tent?
Ay—no, not quite; for now and then I
thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright
May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal
Is high in Heaven, and judg'd with
Plato's God,
Not findable here—content, and not
content,
In some such fashion as a man may be
That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
'Good! very like! and altogether be.'

As yet I had not found myself by
words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love me. Then came the day
when I,
Flattering myself that all my wishes were
best
Born of the best this Age that doubts of
all—
Not I that day of Edith's love to mine—
Had braced my purpose to declare my-
self :
I stood upon the stairs of Faculties.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I
heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the

On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—
there,

There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's
neck,

The sisters closed in one another's arms,
Their people throng'd about them from
the hall,

And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her ;

I could not free myself in honour—bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counterpressures of the yielded hand
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her
eyes

Upon me when she thought I did not
see—

Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but
could I wed her

Loving the other? do her that great
wrong?

Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-
morn?

Had I not known where Love, at first a
fear,

Grew after marriage to full height and
form?

Yet after marriage, that mock-sister
there—

Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—
What end but darkness could ensue from
this

For all the three? So Love and Honour
jarr'd

Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise
the full

High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up
and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote :

'My mother bids me ask' (I did not tell
you—

A widow with less guile than many a
child.

God help the wrinkled children that are
Christ's

As well as the plump cheek—she wrought
us harm,

Poor soul, not knowing) 'are you ill?'
(so ran

The letter) 'you have not been here of
late.

You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North.

I told your wayside story to my mother
And Evelyn. She remembers you.
Farewell.

Pray come and see my mother. Almost
blind

With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
She sees you when she hears. Again
farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to
warm so far

That I could stamp my image on her
heart!

'Pray come and see my mother, and
farewell.'

Cold, but as welcome as free airs of
heaven

After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,
strange!

What dwarfs are men! my strangled
vanity

Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vex't myself
And all in vain for her—cold heart or
none—

No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the
day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,
I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passion-
less—

'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again, and
placed

My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no
word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn
clung

In utter silence for so long, I thought
'What will she never set her sister free?'

We left her, happy each in each, and
then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have torrents,
lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the
fair,

To lift us as it were from commonplace.
And help us to our joy. Better have
sent

Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would
not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming
world

Is not mistaking vision of the Powers
behind the world, that make our grutes
our gods.

For on the dark night of a strange to-
day

The great Tragedian, that had quench'd
himself

In that assumption of the bridesmaid—
she

That loved me—our true Edith—has
been broke

With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Aeolian winds
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray
Before *Maria*—so I think; and flung
They found her beating the hard *Præsen-*
tial doors.

She died and she was buried ere we
knew.

I leapt at once. I had to speak. At
once

The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that
had sunn'd

The *nocturne* of our marriage, past away;
And on our home-return the daily wail
Of Edith in the house, the garden, tall
Haunted or like her ghost; and by and
by,

Either from that necessary for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain
innocence

Of nature, or desire that her last child
Should turn from both the praise of
heroism,

The mother broke her promise to the
dead,

And told the living daughter with what
love

Edith had wearied my brief wooing of
her,

And all her sweet self-sacrifice and fealty.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt
 the twins—
 Did I not tell you they were twins?—
 prevail'd
 So far that no caress could win my wife
 Back to that passionate answer of full
 heart
 I had from her at first. Not that her
 love,
 Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of
 love,
 Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous
 wa
 For ever woke the unhappy Past again,
 Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be
 my bride,
 Put forth cold hands between us, and I
 fear'd
 The very fountains of her life were
 chill'd ;
 So took her thence, and brought her
 here, and here
 She bore a child, whom reverently we
 call'd
 Edith ; and in the second year was born
 A second—this I named from her own
 self,
 Evelyn ; then two weeks—no more—she
 joined,
 In and beyond the grave, that one she
 loved.
 Now in this quiet of declining life,
 Thro' dreams by night and trances of the
 day,
 The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
 Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
 One from the other, no, nor care to tell
 One from the other, only know they
 come,
 They smile upon me, till, remembering
 all
 The love they both have borne me, and
 the love

I bore them both—divided as I am
 From either by the stillness of the grave—
 I know not which of these I love the
 best.

But *you* love Edith ; and her own true
 eyes
 Are traitors to her ; our quick Evelyn—
 The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,
 And not without good reason, my good
 son—
 Is yet untouch'd : and I that hold them
 both
 Dearest of all things—well, I am not
 sure—
 But if there lie a preference eitherway,
 And in the rich vocabulary of Love
 'Most dearest' be a true superlative—
 I think I likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE ; OR,
 THE ENTAIL.¹

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur New
 Squire coom'd last night.
 Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä wi'
 tha back : all right ;
 Butter I warrants be prime, an' I
 warrants the heggs be as well,
 Iafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya
 breäks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit : hev a glass o'
 cowslip wine !
 I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as
 thaw they was gells o' mine,
 Fur then we was all es one, the Squire
 an' 'is darters an' me,
 Iall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver
 not took to she :

¹ See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

An' 'e gied— I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow
 much—fur an owd scratted stoän,
 An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an'
 'e got a brown pot an' a boän,
 An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä,
 wi' good gowd o' the Queen,
 An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an'
 which was a shaame to be seen ;
 But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e
 niver not seed to owt,
 An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an'
 booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laady es long es she
 lived she kep 'em all clear,
 Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed
 none of 'er darters 'ere ;
 But arter she died we was all es one, the
 childer an' me,
 An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens
 we hed 'em to tea.
 Lawk ! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud
 talk o' their Missis's waäys,
 An' the Missis talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll
 tell tha some o' these daäys.
 Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop,
 like 'er mother afoor—
 'Er an' 'er blessed darter they niver
 derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd
 gotten a fright at last,
 An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's
 letters they foller'd sa fast ;
 But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e
 says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
 ' Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the
 gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
 Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps
 es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
 An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I
 may saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e
 sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im ' Noa.'
 ' I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an'
 be dang'd if I iver let goä !
 Coom ! coom ! feyther,' 'e says, ' why
 shouldn't thy booöks be sowd ?
 I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe
 worth their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd
 'em, belong'd to the Squire,
 But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i' the
 middle to kindle the fire ;
 Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd
 nigh to nowt at the saäle,
 And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git
 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were
 that outdacious at 'oäm,
 Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell
 wi' a small-tooth coämb—
 Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk
 wi' the farmer's aäle,
 Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't
 cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck ; and a
 thurn be a-grawin' theer,
 I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy
 es I see'd it to-year—
 Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied
 me a scare tother night,
 Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i'
 the derk, fur it looökt sa white.
 ' Billy,' says 'e, ' hev a joomp !—thaw
 the banks o' the beck be sa ligh,
 Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw
 niver a hair wur awry ;

But Billy fell lakks o' Chasles, an'
Charlie 'e look 'is neck,
So theer wur a hend o' the tail, fur 'e had
'is tail o' the back.

XIV.

So 'is tail wur lost an' 'is boots was
gone an' 'is tay wur droll,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e
niver not lift oop 'is tail :
Hallas a soft un Squire ! an' 'e smiled,
fur 'e hedn't naw friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried together,
an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the
mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reads o' a sewer an' sarten 'oop o' the
tother side ;
But I beant that sewer es the Lord, how-
siver they praäy'd an' praäy'd,
I ets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their
debts to be paid.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor
owl Squire i' the wind,
An' I cried along wi' the gills, fur they
wunt never come to the good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long 'un she walkt awaay-
wi' a holliser laä,
An' nawbody 'eard on 'er sin, or o' 'er name,
she be gone to the bad !
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, wunt
'arts she niver 'ed name . . .
Strange an' unheppan ! Miss Lucy ! we
naämed her 'Dot an' gaw oost !
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out
ony harm i' the legs,
An' the fever 'ed bakked Jinny's back so
bald as one o' them *brads*.
An' Nelly wur up fr' the *uncollie* an' leg
i' the mouth as a cow,

† Unwisely, unwonted.

An' now she runs hammergreen, 'e had, so
she wunt get a *mooney* nyther :
An' so the Miss Annie we call'd her, wunt
my own folks to my face-
' A huggenwagger village wife we 'ad been be-
ter'd her *naw* jester,
How fur Miss Harrow the *holliser* her now
be agree to 'e laws,
I knowes that mouth o' that, so it think
not fit to be read ?

XVII.

So I didn't see tölke it kindly to the
Miss Annie to say-
Es I should be tölke in *nyther* way, so wunt
to they wunt away,
Fat, lunks ! how I wunt what they wunt,
and her Nelly she glad me to be tölke,
fur I'd be tölke out for the Squire an' 'e
galls (so *belong*) to the good ;
Unwont, so I said aise, thiller *mooney*
we *nyther* !
But I wunt 'em, an' better her *huggen* the
huggen o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they lallies paid what I had, so I
lallies *hollie* at the Hall,
An' they wunt to what wunt was, so they
know'd what 'e *huggen* was to 'e !
Huggenwagger they wunt, so they
wunt 'e *nyther* nyther . . .
I'd I paid *nyther* *Hollie* wunt, so they
lallies *huggen* on the wunt,
An' I wunt *nyther* *nyther* 'e *nyther* *nyther*,
they dunt it at *Wittie's* farm,
Tawny *nyther* *nyther* 'e *nyther* *nyther*,
so they wunt *nyther*.

XIX.

So now Squire's wunt'd wi' 'e tail to be
good, so *nyther* *nyther* *nyther* :

† *nyther*.

† *nyther*.

I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my
 nightcap wur on ;
 Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he
 coom'd last night sa laäte —
 Pluksh ! ! ! the hens i' the peas ! why
 didn't tha hesp the gaäte ?

IN THE CHILDREN'S
 HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never
 had seen him before,
 But he sent a chill to my heart when I
 saw him come in at the door,
 Fresh from the surgery-schools of France
 and of other lands—
 Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big
 merciless hands !
 Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but
 they said too of him
 He was happier using the knife than in
 trying to save the limb,
 And that I can well believe, for he look'd
 so coarse and so red,
 I could think he was one of those who
 would break their jests on the dead,
 And mangle the living dog that had loved
 him and fawn'd at his knee—
 Drench'd with the hellish oorali—that
 ever such things should be !

II.

Here was a boy I am sure that some of
 our children would die
 But for the voice of Love, and the smile,
 and the comforting eye—
 Here was a boy in the ward, every bone
 seem'd out of its place—

¹ A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands
 to scare trespassing fowl.

Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was
 all but a hopeless case :
 And he handled him gently enough ; but
 his voice and his face were not kind,
 And it was but a hopeless case, he had
 seen it and made up his mind,
 And he said to me roughly 'The lad will
 need little more of your care.'
 'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek
 the Lord Jesus in prayer ;
 They are all his children here, and I pray
 for them all as my own :'
 But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman,
 can prayer set a broken bone ?'
 Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I
 know that I heard him say
 'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus
 has had his day.'

III.

Had ? has it come ? It has only dawn'd.
 It will come by and by.
 O how could I serve in the wards if the
 hope of the world were a lie ?
 How could I bear with the sights and the
 loathsome smells of disease
 But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye
 do it to these ?'

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward
 where the younger children are laid :
 Here is the cot of our orphan, our dar-
 ling, our meek little maid ;
 Empty you see just now ! We have lost
 her who loved her so much—
 Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive
 plant to the touch ;
 Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often
 moved me to tears,
 Hers was the gratefullest heart I have
 found in a child of her years—

Nay you remember our Annie; you
used to send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, they said
'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!
They that can wonder at well where the
works of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy you had got from a
cowslip out of the field;
Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all
they can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like
the waft of an Angel's wing;
And she lay with a flower in her hand and
her thin hands crost on her breast—
Was, but as pretty as heart you desire,
and we thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping our nurse, our doctor
said 'Poor little dear,
Nurse, I must do it tomorrow: she'll
never live thro' it, I fear.'

v.

I walk'd with our kindly old Doctor as
far as the head of the stair,
Then I turn'd to the ward; the nurse
didn't say I was there.

vi.

Never since I was born, had I heard my
grieved and so vast!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd
from her cot to the next,
'He says I shall never live thro' it, O
Annie, what shall I do?'
Annie consider'd. 'If I could the kindest
little Annie. 'was you.
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to
help me, for Emmie, you see,
It's all in the pleasure store.' 'Little
children should come to me.'
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I
find that it always can please—
Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with
children about his knee.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then
if I call to the Lord,
How likely he knows that I'm not such
a bit of flesh in the world?'
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she
consider'd and said:
'Emmie, you just see your Aunt, and you
know how sensible she is—
The Lord has no need to say to her,
Emmie, you tell it him please,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out
on the counterpane.'

vii.

I had set three lights by the child—I
could not watch her for fear—
My brain had begun to reel, I felt I
could do it no more.
That was my sleeping-night, but I
thought that it never would pass.
There was a thundering noise, and a
clatter of feet on the glass,
And there was a phantom my feet I found
as I sat alone,
The mysterious voice of a hand in the
room, and the darkness without;
My sleep was broken broken with dreams
of the dreadful kind—
And here for ever brilliant Emmie who
never would separate with her life;
There in the glow of the morning I found
dearest by me and smiled,
And the dying nurse at his hour, and we
went home to the child.

viii.

He had brought her gently back; we
kissed her white eyes—
Her hair long, long, with arms lying out
on the counterpane;
Say that He say to her? No, why should
we care after they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her,
'and Emmie had just say:

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE
PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,
which lived
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life—if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance—then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's
praise
From thine own State, and all our
breadth of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds
in light,
Ascends to thee; and this March morn
that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy
grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee! and who can
tell—
Thou—England's England-loving daughter—thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her
flag
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our
poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee,
I say
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O
banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle to thine
the battle-cry!

Never with mightier glory than when we
had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly
siege of Lucknow—
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but
ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the
hold that we held with our lives—
Women and children among us, God help
them, our children and wives!
Held it we might—and for fifteen days or
for twenty at most.
'Never surrender, I charge you, but
every man die at his post!'
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our
Lawrence the best of the brave:
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd
him—we laid him that night in his
grave.
'Every man die at his post!' and there
hail'd on our houses and halls
Death from their rifle-bullets, and death
from their cannon-balls,
Death in our innermost chamber, and
death at our slight barricade,
Death while we stood with the musket, and
death while we stooped to the spade,
Death to the dying, and wounds to the
wounded, for often there fell,
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro'
it, their shot and their shell,
Death—for their spies were among us, their
marks-men were told of our best,
So that the brute bullet broke thro' the
brain that could think for the rest;
Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and
bullets would rain at our feet
Fire from ten thousand at once of the
rebels that girdled us round—

Death at the glance of a finger from
 over the breadth of a street,
 Death from the heights of the tower and
 the palace, and death to the ground!
 Mine? yes, a mine? Circumstances? down
 down! and creep thro' the hole!
 Keep the revolver in hand! you are here
 him—the murderer's note!
 Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of
 the pickaxe be here!
 Click with the pick, coming nearer
 and nearer again than before—
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the
 dark pioneer is no more!
 And ever upon the joyous and
 banner of England blow!

III.

Ay, but the sea spring 's come many
 times, and it closed on a day
 Swam as the first of that midnight
 thunderclap echo'd away,
 That first the millions of soldiers like
 so many birds to their fall—
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, rolling on
 valley, and full upon fall—
 Fiercely on all the defenceless and
 enemy fell.
 What have they done? where is he? Out
 yonder. Guard the tower?
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it is
 Singing and swaying all round us, as
 ocean on every side—
 Furgos and heaves at a bank that is
 daily drown'd by the tide—
 So many thousands that if they be sold
 enough, who shall escape?
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall
 know we are soldiers and men!
 Ready! take aim at their leaders— their
 masses are gapp'd with our guns.

Thousand they had like the waves like
 the wave dashing toward again,
 Flying and falling to the sea by the banks
 till they could not swim,
 And ever upon the joyous and
 banner of England blow.

IV.

Handful of men, or no more, we have
 English to fight and to die,
 Strong with the strength of the east to
 command us when we die,
 Each of us fight and hope to the death
 we die but we live!
 Still—could we stand or all ground, we
 were every day better and better,
 There you a witness among us, we only
 witness that just!
 's hidden not seen— if the light had
 seen the full measure—
 Every man all at the point— the
 first order in a day—
 Guard to fall by the hands, they die
 then we will not die!
 How good you are a man, you
 by the sword spring
 I will not, neither shall we with
 our own powder,
 Riflemen, true to your duty, but be sure
 that your hand is no more?
 sweep in the lot of us, but we
 we are back together—
 Take do we had them to come from the
 battle— the first they had,
 I was from the first across the
 we die— with hand ground,
 And ever upon the joyous and
 banner of England blow.

V.

There we you too with morning, neither
 will neither we are
 Clean from, but from the banner, but
 twelve good guns or more.

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there
 from the light of the sun
 One has leapt up on the breach, crying
 out: 'Follow me, follow me!'—
 Mark him—the fall! then another, and
 him too, and down goes he.
 Had they been bold enough then, who
 can tell but the traitors had won?
 Boardings and rafters and beams an em-
 brasure! make way for the gun!
 Now double-charge it with grape! It is
 charged and we fire, and they run.
 Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the
 dark face have his due!
 Thanks to the kindly dark faces who
 fought with us, faithful and true,
 Fought with the bravest among us, and
 drove them, and smote them, and
 slew,
 That ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not
 what we do. We can fight!
 But to be soldier all day and be sentinel
 all thro' the night—
 Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,
 their lying alarms.
 Bugles and drums in the darkness, and
 shoutings and soundings to arms,
 Ever the labour of fifty that had to be
 done by five,
 Ever the marvel among us that one should
 be left alive,
 Ever the day with its traitorous death
 from the loopholes around,
 Ever the night with its countless corpses
 to be laid in the ground,
 Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge
 ofatarant flies,
 Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite
 torment of flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing
 over an English field,
 Cholera, scum, and fever, the woman
 that *would* not be heal'd,
 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-
 pitiless knife,—
 Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never
 could save us a life.
 Valour of delicate women who tended the
 hospital bed,
 Horror of women in travail among the
 dying and dead,
 Grief for our perishing children, and
 never a moment for grief,
 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering
 hopes of relief,
 Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd
 for all that we knew—
 Then day and night, day and night, coming
 down on the still-shatter'd walls
 Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands
 of cannon-balls—
 But ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner of England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what
 was told by the scout,
 Outram and Havelock breaking their way
 through the fell mutineers?
 Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing
 again in our ears!
 All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubi-
 lant shout,
 Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer
 with conquering cheers,
 Sick from the hospital echo them, women
 and children come out,
 Blessing the wholesome white faces of
 Havelock's good fusileers,
 Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the
 Highlander wet with their tears!

Dance to the ground's—should I we not
 saved!—is it you? is it you?
 Saved by the valour of Mareschall, saved
 by the blessing of Harrow—
 'Held it for fifteen days?' we have held
 it for eighty-seven!
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old
 banner of England flew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD
 COVENTRE.

(IN WALES.)

MY friend should meet me somewhere
 hereabout
 To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one,
 I row—
 I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
 Scratched or carved upon the prison-walls:
 I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,
 For I am angrier than a lion's lioness;
 But God is with me in this wilderness.
 These wet black passes and storm-storming
 glooms,—
 And God's free air, and hope of better
 things.

I would I knew their speech: but now
 to glean,
 Not now—I hope to die—some matter'll
 care.
 Some care for Christ in this wild fell-of
 Wales—
 But, bread, merely for bread. This
 tongue that wagg'^d
 They said with such heretical arrogance
 Against the proud archbishop Arundel—
 So much God's cause was flout in it—
 here

But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
 'Dare!'—what use?—the shepherd,
 when I speak,
 Yelling a vulgar syllab with his teeth—
 'Devil Staining?'—passion, medicine, things
 of old—
 No faith of ours. Had he God's word
 in Welsh
 He might be kinder:—happily some day

Not hand yet move, then little faith-
 less
 In Judah, for in Judah Lord you have;
 Not that is friends, here, Lamentworth,
 Last, for in that the worst was brought.

Heaven-ward! Enough, something
 word,
 Who willows—again to the South is
 Greek
 About the old Multitude of names
 And those in Latin to the Latin crowd,
 As good word was—then here come to
 with you also—
 Heaven's then, halting Footman,
 Must turn to me the wagner of all the
 work,
 Yet are there those own names that their
 bring—
 Not pass, I would, to live.

What did he say,
 My friend? What power when I
 —
 In flying holes? that one night a crowd
 'Thoug'd the worst had about the day
 —
 The king was in their worldly word
 —
 Why then? they seem to have their
 position. Then
 some mind me, caddis, me, the great
 Lord Colton!

Ay, for they love me ! but the king—nor
voice

Nor finger raised against him—took and
hang'd,

Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—
thirty-nine—

Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends,
as rebels

And burn'd alive as heretics ! for your
Priest

Labels—to take the king along with
him—

All heresy, treason : but to call men
traitors

May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,

Red in thy birth, redder with household
war,

Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—

If somewhere in the North, as Rumour
sang

Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lust-
ing line—

By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,¹
That were my rose, there my allegiance
due.

Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd :
doubtless dead.

So to this king I cleaved : my friend was
he,

Once my fast friend : I would have given
my life

To help his own from scathe, a thousand
lives

To save his soul. He might have come
to learn

Our Wicklifs learning : but the worldly
Priests

Who fear the king's hard common-sense
should find

What rotten piles uphold their mason-
work,

Urge him to foreign war. O had he
will'd

I might have stricken a lusty stroke for
him,

But he would not ; far liever led my
friend

Back to the pure and universal church,
But he would not : whether that heirless
flaw

In his throne's title make him feel so
frail,

He leans on Antichrist ; or that his
mind,

So quick, so capable in soldiership,

In matters of the faith, alas the while !

More worth than all the kingdoms of
this world,

Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my
dear friend !

Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley !
Lord give thou power to thy two wit-
nesses !

Lest the false faith make merry over
them !

Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and
stand,

Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually—

Cry—against whom ?

Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice what ! the kingly, kindly
boy ;

Who took the world so easily heretofore,
My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him
Who gibed and japed—in many a merry
tale

That shook our sides—at Pardoners,
Summoners,

Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries

¹ Richard II.

And numerous, when the wild lust and
the wine

Had set the wits afire.

Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East?

Better to coil

Thy flour-side lys in slime again, and
fling

Thy royalty back into the stony fire
Of wine and burlesque: thy shame, had
mine,

Thy comrade—than to persecute the
Lord,

And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitre
Arundel

Drains our unlicensed premium to the
flame,

The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his
clerks

Into the suburb—their hard celibacy.

Sworn to be virgins ere of parness,
sworn

Into adulterous living, or still retire

As holy Paul—a shame to speak of
them.

Among the hoodlums—

Statuary painted

To handle, thief, assassin— you to him

Who lacks his mother's throe—deaf'd
to him,

Who finds the Saviour in his mother
tongue.

The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung
down to swine—

The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who
will come,

God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.

Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel,
meant

To course and range thro' all the world,
should be

Tether'd to some dead pillar of the
Church—

Neither more so, if that will have it so,
Dumb-wind, sun-drown, and wind-burnt,
and ill!

Thus as the leg of Babylon) set loose
long,

O Lord, how long!

My blood should smother me, how—
How is the scope, that limited and—
curs'd!

To-day, dead wood, I live—'stead of
bones.

Rather to thee, great blessings work of
God,

Black-belly, and whitewash'd sugar-
ingress!

Rather to thee, that living water, drawn
By this good Well's mountain more from
bottom,

And making steady to my more
longer—

No Lark—He that himself, come and
drink!

— [He] how I regard Arundel among us
To worship Holy Cross!— [Arundel] mine
arm,

God's work, I sing, a mass of flesh, and
blood

And liver. That was mine. (My
good firm)

By the God should be with us!—
'Hurray!

'Hurray! (He is God's true image)

Are daily burnt:— 'Hurray—'Duc-
ant)!— 'Flaw.

Hatched and scourg'd-out, let it rest
open.

Do justice to his Lord, God bless him,
'Hurray!

Not driven, not used!— 'What justice
on all just!

Between me and my God? I would not
 spurn
 Good counsel of good friends, but shrive
 myself
 No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'
 (My friend is long in coming.) 'Pil-
 grimages?'
 'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-
 dances, vice.
 The poor man's money gone to fat the
 friar.
 Who reels of begging saints in Scrip-
 ture?'—'Heresy'—
 (Hath he been here—not found me—gone
 again?)
 Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?)
 'Bread—
 Bread left after the blessing?' how they
 stared,
 That was their main test-question—
 glared at me!
 'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He
 veils
 His flesh in bread, body and bread
 together.'
 Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd
 wolves,
 'No bread, no bread. God's body!'
 Archbishop, Bishop,
 Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers,
 Parish-clerks—
 'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority of
 the Church,
 Power of the keys!'—Then I, God help
 me, I
 So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two
 whole days—
 I lost myself and fell from evenness,
 And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever
 since
 Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
 Into the church, had only prov'n them-
 selves

Poisoners, murderers. Well—God
 pardon all—
 Me, them, and all the world—yea, that
 proud Priest,
 That mock-meek mouth of utter Anti-
 christ,
 That traitor to King Richard and the
 truth,
 Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
 Amen!
 Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
 Be by me in my death.
 Those three! the fourth
 Was like the son of God. Not burnt
 were they.
 On *them* the smell of burning had not
 past.
 That was a miracle to convert the king.
 These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
 What miracle could turn? *He* here
 again,
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself,
 And doom'd to burn alive.
 So, caught, I burn.
 Burn? heathen men have borne as much
 as this,
 For freedom, or the sake of those they
 loved,
 Or some less cause, some cause far less
 than mine;
 For every other cause is less than mine.
 The moth will singe her wings, and
 singed return,
 Her love of light quenching her fear of
 pain
 How now, my soul, we do not heed the
 fire?
 Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd!
 faint as I am,
 God willing, I will burn for Him.
 Who comes?
 A thousand marks are set upon my head.

Friend?—for perhaps a trade for
then!

Nay, but my friend. These are so well
disguised,

I know thee not. Hast thou brought
bread with thee?

I have not broken bread for fifty hours.

None? I am damn'd already by the
Priest

For holding there was bread where bread
was none—

No bread. My friends await me yonder?
Yes.

Lead on then. [To the mountain? Is
it far?

Not far. Climb first and reach me down
thy hand.

I am not like to die for lack of bread.

For I must live to testify by fire.¹

COLUMBUS.

CHAIS, my good lord: in your raised
brows I read

Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.

We brought this iron from our isles of
gold.

Does the king know you design to visit
him

Whom once he rose from off his throne
to greet

Before his people, like his brother king?

I saw your face that morning in the
crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then
so bearded. Yes. The city deck'd
herself

To meet me, roar'd my name: the king,
the queen

Had me be seated, speak, and tell them all

¹ He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1382.

The glory of my wrongs and while I
spoke

The crowd's a roar fell as at the Prince's
legion!

And when I ceased to speak, the king,
the queen

Stalk from their thrones, and rushed into
mine.

And kneel'd, and lifted hand and foot and
eyes.

In praise of God who led me thro' the
waves.

And then the great Columbus' rose to
heaven.

Chorus for the Admiral of the Ocean!
Chorus

For him who gave a new heaven, a new
earth,

As holy John had prophesied of us,

Gave glory and name to us to the kings
Of Spain, near all their battles' shame—
for him

Who push'd his galleys into the setting
sun,

And made West, East, and sail'd the
Dragon's mouth,

And rose upon the Mountains of the
World,

And saw the seven toll from Paradise!

Chorus! we are Admiral of the Ocean,
we,

We and our fate for ever—Foolhard!

Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic
Queen—

Of the Ocean—of the Indian—Admirals
we—

Our title, which we never mean to yield,

Our quarrels not alone for what we did,
But our quarrels for all we might have
done—

The soul's monument of our strongest life—

Eighteen long years of waste, seven in
 your Spain,
 Lost, showing courts and kings a truth
 the babe
 Will suck in with his milk hereafter -
 earth
 A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
 We fronted there the learning of all
 Spain,
 All their cosmogonies, their astronomies :
 Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the
 golden guess
 Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
 No guess-work! I was certain of my goal ;
 Some thought it heresy, but that would
 not hold.
 King David call'd the heavens a hide, a
 tent
 Spread over earth, and so this earth was
 flat :
 Some cited old Lactantius : could it be
 That trees grew downward, rain fell up-
 ward, men
 Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and
 besides,
 The great Augustine wrote that none
 could breathe
 Within the zone of heat ; so might there
 be
 Two Adams, two mankinds, and that
 was clean
 Against God's word : thus was I beaten
 back,
 And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
 And thought to turn my face from Spain,
 appeal
 Once more to France or England ; but
 our Queen
 Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
 Were half-assured this earth might be a
 sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
 All glory to the mother of our Lord,
 And Holy Church, from whom I never
 swerved
 Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
 I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet - not all - last night a dream -
 I sail'd
 On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights
 Of my first crew, their curses and their
 groans.
 The great flame-banner borne by Tene-
 riffe,
 The compass, like an old friend false at last
 In our most need, appall'd them, and the
 wind
 Still westward, and the weedy seas—at
 length
 The land-bird, and the branch with berries
 on it,
 The carven staff—and last the light, the
 light
 On Guanahani ! but I changed the name ;
 San Salvador I call'd it ; and the light
 Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad
 sky
 Of dawning over—not those alien palms,
 The marvel of that fair new nature—not
 That Indian isle, but our most ancient
 East
 Moriah with Jerusalem ; and I saw
 The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
 Thro' all the homely town from jasper,
 sapphire,
 Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
 Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
 Jacynth, and amethyst—and those twelve
 gates,
 Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death
 I shall die
 I am written in the Lamb's own Book of
 Life

To walk within the glory of the Lord
 Sunless and moonless, other light—
 no!

The Lord had sent this bright, strange
 dream to me

To mind me of the secret vow I took
 When Spain was waging war against the
 Moor—

I strove myself with Spain against the
 Moor.

There came two voices from the Sepul-
 chre,

Two friars crying that if Spain should
 win—

The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
 Salar of Egypt, would break down and
 rise—

The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I
 vow'd!

That, if our Princes harkn'd to my
 prayer,

Whichever wealth I brought from that
 world—

Should, in the old, be consecrate to lead
 A new crusade against the Saracen.

And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes
 gold enough

If left alone!— being but a Genoese.

I am handled worse than had I been a
 Moor.

And breach'd the belting wall of Cairo
 town,

And given the Great Khan's palace to
 the Moor.

Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Pious
 John,

And cast it to the Moor: but had I
 brought

From Solomon's now-ruin'd Optir all

The gold that Solomon's navies carried
 home,

Would that have gildn'd—? What blood
 of Spain.

The' quivering pavilion roof droop'd
 with
 Spain.

I have seen those blood and black blood
 of Spain.

The count and the covert of fasting,
 How'd on some Hispaniol; for you
 know

The flag at home, that year yearning
 Ask (how the highest hands) and narrow
 close—

Trunk in the distance—those without
 me—

That even our prudent king, our right—
 your—

I pray'd them being so discontented

They would commission one of weight
 and worth

To judge between my discontent'd self and
 —

Convent my wealth enemy at their costs.

They said our infidel, how'd he, —
 As ignominious and impious in a house—

Withhold yourselves, and random goods—
 who'd!M

My dwelling, about upon my prison—
 house.

My eyes— feel the relief of the crown—
 Sold the cross home for all but nothing—
 your

All that has here for all its worth—
 —

Drawn to and my great brothers home to
 settle.

And gathering with his gold— a single
 joint

Worth'd my ten thousand Castilian—
 —

They (all success) hit down into the
 abyss—

The secret of the latitude on the hill.

The seat of my discovering, over all.

Him and his gold : the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the
shore.

There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God

Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O
my lord,

I swear to you I heard his voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe!

Have I not been about thee from thy
birth?

Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-
sea?

Set thee in light till time shall be no
more?

Is it I who have deceived thee or the
world?

Endure! thou hast done so well for men,
that men

Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?'

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when
drowning hope

Sank all but out of sight, I heard his
voice,

'Be not cast down. I lead thee by the
hand,

Fear not.' And I shall hear his voice
again—

I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will—
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and
king—

The first discoverer starves—his followers,
all

Flower into fortune—our world's way—
and I,

Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal
And seeing what a door for scoundrel
scum

I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,
Their wives and children Spanish concu-
bines,

Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in
blood,

Some dead of hunger, some beneath the
scourge,

Some over-labour'd, some by their own
hands,

Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,
kill

Their babies at the breast for hate of
Spain

Ah God, the harmless people whom we
found

In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!

Who took us for the very Gods from
Heaven,

And we have sent them very fiends from
Hell;

And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led
the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic
Queen

Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou com-
forted!

This creedless people will be brought to
Christ

And down the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who
bore the Cross

Thither, were excommunicated there,
 For curling crimes that scandalised the
 Cross,
 By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
 Rome's Vicar in our Indies I who believe
 These hard memorials of our truth to
 Spain
 Clung closer to us for a longer term
 Than any friend - if once at Court! and
 yet
 Pardon - *was* hers, *was* mine. I am ready
 with pains.

You see that I have hung these by my
 bed,
 And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are
 God's
 Own voice to justify the deed - perchance
 Spain once the most chivalric race on
 earth,
 Spain then the mightiest, *was* the most
 on earth,
 So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
 To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
 Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
 Then some one standing by my grave
 will say,
 'Behold the bones of a Christopher
 Colón' -
 'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean
 - the chains?' -
 I sorrow for that kindly *land* of Spain
 Who then will have to answer, 'These
 same chains
 Bound these same bones back thro' the
 Atlantic sea,
 Which he unchain'd for all the world to
 come.'

O Queen of Heaven who smotherest the souls
 in Hell

And purgatory, I suffer all as much
 As they do - for the memory. Stay, my
 son
 In here *an* - my son will speak for
 me
 Altho' that I can see these - *bones* that
 grind
 Bone against bone. You will see. One
 last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you
 tell
 King Ferdinand who plays with me, that
 one,
 Whose life has been no play with him
 and his
 Hidalgo - *adiposities*, *luminous*, *tears*,
 fights,
 Mutinies, treasons - *winked* at, and
 condoned -
 That I am loyal to him till the death,
 And ready - *the* - our Holy Catholic
 Queen,
 Who fain had pledged her jewels on my
 first voyage,
 Whose *days* was mine in *normal* *the*
 Catholic faith,
 Who wept with me when I *resolv'd* in
Spain,
 Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
 To whom I send my prayers by *ways* and
days -
 She is gone - but you will tell the King,
 that I,
 Ready as I am with *guns*, and *warlike*
 with *pains* -
 Gain'd in the service of His Highness,
 yet
 Am ready to sail forth on any *low* voyage,
 And *ready*, if the King would *hear*, to
lose
 One *last* *cross* against the *Stream*,
 And save Our Holy *Smother* from *hell*.

Going? I am old and slighted : you
 have dared
 Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor
 thanks !
 I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND.

A. D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race he had
 stricken my father dead—
 But I gather'd my fellows together, I
 swore I would strike off his head.
 Each of them look'd like a king, and was
 noble in birth as in worth,
 And each of them boasted he sprang from
 the oldest race upon earth.
 Each was as brave in the fight as the
 bravest hero of song,
 And each of them liefer had died than
 have done one another a wrong.
 He lived on an isle in the ocean we
 sail'd on a Friday morn
 He that had slain my father the day before
 I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean,
 and there on the shore was he.
 But a sudden blast blew us out and away
 thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we
 never had touch'd at before,
 Where a silent ocean always broke on a
 silent shore,
 And the brooks glitter'd on in the light
 without sound, and the long water-
 falls
 Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base
 of the mountain walls,

And the poplar and cypress unshaken by
 storm flourish'd up beyond sight,
 And the pine shot aloft from the crag to
 an unbelievable height,
 And high in the heaven above it there
 flicker'd a songless lark,
 And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull
 couldn't low, and the dog couldn't
 bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but
 never a murmur, a breath—
 It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it
 quiet as death,
 And we hated the beautiful Isle, for
 whenever we strove to speak
 Our voices were thinner and fainter than
 any flittermouse-shriek ;
 And the men that were mighty of tongue
 and could raise such a battle-cry
 That a hundred who heard it would rush
 on a thousand lances and die—
 O they to be dumb'd by the charm !—so
 fluster'd with anger were they
 They almost fell on each other ; but after
 we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we
 landed, a score of wild birds
 Cried from the topmost summit with
 human voices and words ;
 Once in an hour they cried, and whenever
 their voices peal'd
 The steer fell down at the plow and the
 harvest died from the field,
 And the men dropt dead in the valleys
 and half of the cattle went lame,
 And the roof sank in on the hearth, and
 the dwelling broke into flame ;
 And the shouting of these wild birds ran
 into the hearts of my crew,
 Till they shouted along with the shouting
 and seized one another and slew ;

But I drew them the one from the other ;
 I saw that we could not stay,
 And we left the dead to the fowls and we
 sail'd with our wounded away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers:
 their breath rose up out on the seas,
 For the Spring and the middle Summer
 sat each on the lap of the breeze:
 And the red passion-flower to the cliffs,
 and the dark-blue clematis, clung,
 And starr'd with a myriad blossom the
 long convulvulus hung ;
 And the topmost spire of the mountain
 was lilies in lieu of snow,
 And the lilies like glaciers winded down,
 running out below
 Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the
 blaze of gorse, and the flush
 Of millions of roses that sprang without
 leaf or a thorn from the bush ;
 And the whole isle-side flashing down
 from the peak without ever a tree
 swept like a torrent of gems from the
 sky to the blue of the sea ;
 And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and
 vaulted our kith and our kin,
 And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and
 chanted the triumph of Finn,
 Till each like a golden image was
 pollen'd from head to feet
 And each was as dry as a cricket, with
 thirst in the middle-day heat.
 Blossom and blossom, and promise of
 blossom, but never a fruit !
 And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we
 hated the isle that was mute,
 And we tore up the flowers by the million
 and flung them in bight and bay,
 And we left but a naked rock, and in
 anger we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits : all
 came from the hills and the slopes,
 Purple or white, dangled a hundred
 titheon of grapes,
 And the warm rambles lay like a lithe an
 on the ivy sand,
 And the fig ran up from the bush and
 curled over the land,
 And the mountain rose like a jewell'd
 throne that the fuggest air,
 Glowing with all-colour'd flowers and with
 golden masses of pear,
 And the crimson and scarlet of berries
 that flamed upon bine and vine,
 But in every berry and fruit was the
 poisonous pleasure of wine ;
 And the peak of the mountain was apples,
 the biggest that ever were seen,
 And the fruit, as they grew, smother'd
 with hardly a leaflet between,
 And all of them rotting their rotting health
 in that stunted stem,
 And setting, when I came down-side, the
 very sunset flame :
 And we stay'd three days, and we feasted
 and we smother'd, till every one
 flew
 He would on his fellow to-day live, and
 ever they struth and they flew ;
 And myself, I had seen but myself, and
 fought till I smother'd the day,
 Till I had them remember my father's
 death, and we sail'd away.

VIII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire : we were
 lured by the light from afar,
 For the peak rose up one league of day
 to the North-east star ;
 Lured by the glare and the ideas, but
 scarcely could stand upright.

For the whole isle shudder'd and shook
 like a man in a mortal affright ;
 We were giddy besides with the fruits we
 had gorged, and so crazed that at
 last
 There were some leap'd into the fire ;
 and away we sail'd, and we past
 Over that undersea isle, where the water
 is clearer than air :
 Down we look'd : what a garden ! O
 bliss, what a Paradise there !
 Towers of a happier time, low down in
 a rainbow deep
 Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal
 sleep !
 And three of the gentlest and best of my
 people, whate'er I could say,
 Plunged head down in the sea, and the
 Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where
 the heavens lean low on the land,
 And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd
 o'er us a sunbright hand,
 Then it open'd and dropt at the side of
 each man, as he rose from his rest,
 Bread enough for his need till the labour-
 less day dipt under the West ;
 And we wander'd about it and thro' it.
 O never was time so good !
 And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and
 the boast of our ancient blood,
 And we gazed at the wandering wave as
 we sat by the gurgle of springs,
 And we chanted the songs of the Bards
 and the glories of fairy kings ;
 But at length we began to be weary, to
 sigh, and to stretch and yawn,
 Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the
 sunbright hand of the dawn,
 For there was not an enemy near, but the
 whole green Isle was our own,

And we took to playing at ball, and we
 took to throwing the stone,
 And we took to playing at battle, but
 that was a perilous play,
 For the passion of battle was in us, we
 slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and
 heard their musical cry—
 'Come to us, O come, come' in the
 stormy red of a sky
 Dashing the fires and the shadows of
 dawn on the beautiful shapes,
 For a wild witch naked as heaven stood
 on each of the loftiest capes,
 And a hundred ranged on the rock like
 white sea-birds in a row,
 And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced
 on the wrecks in the sand below,
 And a hundred splash'd from the ledges,
 and bosom'd the burst of the spray,
 But I knew we should fall on each other,
 and hastily sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle
 of the Double Towers :
 One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved
 all over with flowers :
 But an earthquake always moved in the
 hollows under the dells,
 And they shock'd on each other and butted
 each other with clashing of bells,
 And the daws flew out of the Towers and
 jangled and wrangled in vain,
 And the clash and boom of the bells
 rang into the heart and the brain,
 Till the passion of battle was on us, and
 all took sides with the Towers,
 There were some for the clean-cut stone,
 there were more for the carven
 flowers,

And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd
 over us all the day,
 For the one half slew the other, and after
 we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who
 had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore,
 He had lived ever since on the Isle and
 his winters were fifteen score.
 And his voice was low as from other
 worlds, and his eyes were sweet,
 And his white hair sank to his heels and
 his white beard fell to his feet,
 And he spake to me, 'O Maudslate, let
 be this purpose of thine !
 Remember the words of the Lord when
 he told us "Vengeance is mine !"
 His fathers have slain thy fathers in war
 or in single strife,
 Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each
 taken a life for a life,
 Thy father had slain his father, how long
 shall the murder last ?
 Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer
 the Past to be Past.
 And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and
 we pray'd as we leav'd him pray,
 And the Holy man he assail'd us, and
 sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown
 from, and there on the shore was he,
 The man that had slain my father. I
 saw him and let him be.
 O weary was I of the travel, the trouble,
 the strife and the sin,
 When I landed again, with a tithe of my
 men, on the Isle of Finn.

DE FROUNNIN.

THE VERY DEEP.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 Where all that seem'd to be, in all that was,
 What'd be a million times the vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous dying
 light—
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 Thro' all this clanging world of things—
 low law,
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,
 And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent, the
 dark orb
 Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest,
 darling boy ;
 Our own ; a babe in lineament and limb
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ;
 Whose face and form are two and yet
 in one,
 Indissolubly married like our love,
 I live and be happy in thyself, and serve
 This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
 May bless thee as we bless thee. O young
 one
 Breaking with laughter from the dark ;
 and may
 The fatal channel where thy mother lives
 Be prospectively thine, and easy thy
 course—
 Along the years of haste and random
 youth
 Unshatter'd : then full narrow aim'd full
 man ;
 And last as kindly various with gentler
 fill,
 By quiet robes, a slowly rising power,
 To the last deep where we are and thou art
 still.

II.

I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 deep,
 From that great deep, before our world
 begins,
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he
 will—
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 From that true world within the world
 we see,
 Whereof our world is but the bounding
 shore—
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
 With this ninth moon, that sends the
 hidden sun
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling
 boy.

II.

For in the world, which is not ours, They
 said
 'Let us make man' and that which
 should be man,
 From that one light no man can look upon,
 Drew to this shore lit by the suns and
 moons
 And all the shadows. O dear Spirit
 half-lost
 In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
 That thou art thou—who wailest being
 born
 And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
 Of this divisible-indivisible world,
 Among the numerable-innumerable
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite
 space
 In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite
 One,
 Who made thee unconceivably Thyself

Out of His whole World-self and all in
 all—
 Live thou ! and of the grain and husk,
 the grape
 And ivyberry, choose ; and still depart
 From death to death thro' life and life,
 and find
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who
 wrought
 Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
 But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
 With power on thine own act and on the
 world.

THE HUMAN CRY

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluiah!—
 Infinite Ideality !
 Immeasurable Reality !
 Infinite Personality !
 Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !

II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou
 and in Thee ;
 We feel we are something—*that* also has
 come from Thee ;
 We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt
 help us to be.
 Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fled far and fast
 To touch all shores, now leaving to the
 skill
 Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
 Have charter'd this ; where, mindful of
 the past,
 Our true co-mates regather round the
 mast ;

Of diverse tongues, but with a common
will
Here, in this roaring room of battle
And cruels, to put forth and leave the
blast ;
For some, descending from the sacred
peak
Of bear high-templed Faith, have langued
again
Their lot with ours to raise the world
about ;
And some are wilder counsels, sworn to
seek
If any golden harlot be for us,
In seas of Death and endless gulfs of
Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOK-
FIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew
you best,
Old Broods, who loved so well to mouth
my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. May's
chimes !
How oft the Cantab supper, host and
guest,
Would echo halcyon laughter to you
just !
How oft with him we paced that walk of
lines,
Him, the best light of those dawn-golden
times,
Who lived you well ! Now both are gone
to rest.
Yon man of humorous melancholy mark,
Dead of some hundred years—OH HEE !
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away !
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark :
Zeals deep—dream of a shadow, gone—
God bless you. I shall join you in a
day.

MONTENEGRO.

They rose to whom their seven sagh-
sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on
the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, war'd by day and
night
Against the Turk ; whose armed marshes
swell
Their bounding power, but his booty
fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reel-
from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone
fight
By thousands down the crags and fires
the vales.
O smallest among peoples ! rough rock-
throne
Of Freedom ! warriors' hunting back the
swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great TARRAGOR ! never more than our
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake
the storm
His breath's a race of nightier moun-
tainers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, VAIN in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hope and
fear,
French of the French, and Lord of human
fate,
Child-lover ; Bard whose fame-lit laurels
glare
Darkening the wreaths of all that would
advance,
Beyond our straits, their claim to be thy
poet !

Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
 As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France!
 Who dost not love our England—so they
 say ;
 I know not—England, France, all man
 to be

Will make one people ere man's race be
 run :
 And I, desiring that diviner day,
 Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
 To younger England in the boy my son.



TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

¹ ATHELSTAN King,
 Lord among Earls,
 Bracelet-bestower and
 Baron of Barons,
 He with his brother,
 Edmund Atheling,
 Gaining a lifelong
 Glory in battle,
 Slew with the sword-edge
 There by Brunanburh,
 Brake the shield-wall,
 Hew'd the lindenwood,²
 Hack'd the battleshield,

Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
 Got from their Grandsires—
 Theirs that so often in
 Strife with their enemies
 Struck for their hoards and their hearths
 and their homes.

¹ I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

² Shields of lindenwood.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
 Bent the Scotsman,
 Fell the shipcrews
 Doom'd to the death.

All the field with blood of the fighters
 Flow'd, from when first the great
 Sun-star of morningtide,
 Lamp of the Lord God
 Lord everlasting,
 Glode over earth till the glorious creature
 Sunk to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
 Marr'd by the javelin,
 Men of the Northland
 Shot over shield.
 There was the Scotsman
 Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
 Long as the daylight
 Lasted, in companies
 Troubled the track of the host that we
 hated,
 Grimly with swords that were sharp from
 the grindstone,
 Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before
 us.

Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it,
 and
 Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend
 it, and
 Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to
 gorge it, and
 That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

xv.

Never had huger
 Slaughter of heroes
 Slain by the sword-edge—
 Such as old writers
 Have writ of in histories—
 Hapt in this isle, since
 Up from the East hither
 Saxon and Angle from
 Over the broad billow
 Broke into Britain with
 Haughty war-workers who
 Harried the Welshman, when
 Earls that were lured by the
 Hunger of glory gat
 Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
 Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and
 round
 The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas
 flung
 Her fringed regis, and around his head
 The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden
 cloud,
 And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
 As when a smoke from a city goes to
 heaven
 Far off from out an island girt by foes,
 All day the men contend in grievous
 war

From their own city, but with set of
 sun
 Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the
 glare
 Flies streaming, if perchance the neigh-
 bours round
 May see, and sail to help them in the
 war;
 So from his head the splendour went to
 heaven.
 From wall to dyke he stept, he stood,
 nor join'd
 The Achæans—honouring his wise
 mother's word
 There standing, shouted, and Pallas far
 away
 Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the
 foe.
 For like the clear voice when a trumpet
 shrills,
 Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a
 town,
 So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
 And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
 Was heard among the Trojans, all their
 hearts
 Were troubled, and the full-maned horses
 whirl'd
 The chariots backward, knowing griefs
 at hand;
 And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
 To see the dread, unwearable fire
 That always o'er the great Peleion's
 head
 Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made
 it burn.
 Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty
 shout,
 Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and
 allies;
 And there and then twelve of their
 noblest died
 Among their spears and chariots.

TO THE PRINCESS FREDERICA
ON HER MARRIAGE.

O you that were eyes and light to the
King till he past away
From the darkness of life—
He saw not his daughter—he blest her :
the blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE GENOLAPH IN WESTMINSTER
ABBEY.

NOT here! the white North has thy
bones ; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE
FLORENTINE.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred
years, and grown
In power, and ever grown, since thine
own
Fair Florence honouring thy activity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from
me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that falls
away.

A LIST OF
THE VARIOUS FORMS IN WHICH
MR. TENNYSON'S WORKS
ARE PUBLISHED.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY EDITION,

In Seven handsome demy octavo volumes, printed in large clear old-faced type on toned paper, with a Steel Engraved Portrait of the Author from a Photograph. Glash, paper, complete, £3. 13s. 6d.; Roxburgh, half-morocco, price £4. 7s. 6d.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Vol. I.—Contains Miscellaneous Poems. II. „ Miscellaneous Poems. III. „ The Princess and other Poems. | Vol. IV.—Contains In Memoriam and Maud. V. „ Idylls of the King. VI. „ Idylls of the King. VII. „ The Dramas. |
|--|---|

Each volume can be had separately, cloth, price 10s. 6d. each; Roxburgh, half-morocco, 12s. 6d. each.

THE AUTHOR'S EDITION.

This Edition is in crown octavo, printed on superfine paper with handsome margins, in clear old-faced type—each volume containing a Frontispiece.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Vol. I.— Early Poems and English Idylls. Price 6s. II.— Locksley Hall, Lucretius, and other Poems. Price 6s. III.— The Idylls of the King (complete). Price 7s. 6d. IV.— The Princess and Maud. Price 6s. V.— Enoch Arden and In Memoriam. Price 6s. VI.— The Dramas. Price 7s. VII.— Ballads, Lover's Tale, and other Poems. | |
|---|--|

This Edition can also be had bound in half-morocco, Roxburgh, price 12s. 6d. per vol. each.

THE SHILLING EDITION

Comprises the Poetical and Dramatic Works in Twelve Pocket Volumes, bound, price One Shilling each Volume. Sold separately.

CONTENTS.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Vol. I.— Miscellaneous Poems. II.— Miscellaneous Poems. III.— Miscellaneous Poems. IV.— Idylls of the King. V.— Idylls of the King. VI.— Idylls of the King. | Vol. VII.— In Memoriam. VIII.— The Princess. IX.— Maud and other Poems. X.— Enoch Arden, &c. XI.— Queen Mary. XII.— Harold. |
|---|--|

THE GUINEA EDITION

Comprises the Poetical and Dramatic Works, in Twelve Volumes, neatly bound and illustrated in cloth box, price 21s.; French morocco, price 31s. 6d.; parchment, price 31s. 0d.

THE ROYAL EDITION,

In One Volume, with 26 Illustrations and Portraits, cloth paper, bound in boards, gilt leaves, price 21s.

THE CABINET EDITION.

This convenient and compact Edition is now complete. It consists of Twelve Volumes fcp. 8vo. printed in clear type, and bound in limp scarlet cloth. The first volume is illustrated with a beautiful Photographic Portrait of the Author, and each succeeding volume has a handsome Engraved Frontispiece. Price 2s. 6d. each volume.

CONTENTS OF THE VOLUMES.

- Vol. I.—**Early Poems.** Illustrated with a Photographic Portrait of Mr. Alfred Tennyson.
 II.—**English Idylls and other Poems.** Containing an Engraving of Mr. Alfred Tennyson's Residence at Aldworth.
 III.—**Locksley Hall and other Poems.** With an Engraved Picture of Farringford.
 IV.—**Lucretius and other Poems.** Containing an Engraving of a Scene in the Garden at Swainston.
 V.—**Idylls of the King.** With an Autotype of the Bust of Mr. Alfred Tennyson by T. Woolner, R.A.
 VI.—**Idylls of the King.** Illustrated with an Engraved Portrait of 'Elaine,' from a Photographic Study of Julia M. Cameron.
 VII.—**Idylls of the King.** Containing an Engraving of 'Arthur,' from a Photographic Study of Julia M. Cameron.
 VIII.—**The Princess.** With an Engraved Frontispiece of 'The Princess.'
 IX.—**Maud and Enoch Arden.** With a Portrait of 'Maud,' taken from a Photographic Study of Julia M. Cameron.
 X.—**In Memoriam.** With a Steel Engraving of Arthur H. Hallam, engraved from a Picture in possession of the Author by J. C. Armytage.
 XI.—**Queen Mary:** a Drama. With Engraved Frontispiece after Drawing by Walter Crane.
 XII.—**Harold:** a Drama. With Engraved Frontispiece after Drawing by Walter Crane.
 XIII.—**BALLADS, Lover's Tale, and other Poems.**

This Edition is also issued in a handsome green case, forming an elegant ornament for the Drawing Room or Library Table.

THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS.

In small 8vo. green cloth, lettered.

| | s. d. | | s. d. |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| Ballads and other Poems | 5 0 | Idylls of the King. Collected. Small 8vo. | 6 0 |
| Poems. Small 8vo. | 6 0 | Enoch Arden, &c. Small 8vo. | 3 6 |
| Maud and other Poems. Small 8vo. | 3 6 | In Memoriam. Small 8vo. | 4 0 |
| The Princess. Small 8vo. | 3 6 | Harold: a Drama. Crown 8vo. | 6 0 |
| Idylls of the King. Small 8vo. | 5 0 | Queen Mary: a Drama. Crown 8vo. | 6 0 |
| The Holy Grail and other Poems. Small 8vo. | 4 6 | Ballads and other Poems | 5 0 |
| Gareth and Lynette. Small 8vo. | 3 0 | Lover's Tale and other Poems | 3 6 |

THE CROWN EDITION,

In One Volume, crown 8vo. cloth, price 6s. ; cloth extra, bevelled boards, gilt edges, price 7s. 6d. ; Roxburgh, price 8s. 6d.

THE PRINCESS: a Medley. Printed on hand-made paper, with a Miniature Frontispiece by H. M. Paget, and a Tailpiece in Outline by Gordon Browne. Parchment, price 6s. ; vellum, price 7s. 6d.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WORKS OF MR. TENNYSON. Square 8vo. cloth. With a Portrait of the Author, engraved by Vincent Brooks from a Photograph by the London Stereoscopic Company. Price 3s. 6d. In cloth, gilt extra, price 4s.

SONGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF MR. TENNYSON. New and Cheaper Edition. 16mo. cloth, price 2s. 6d.

SONGS SET TO MUSIC, by various Composers. Edited by W. G. CUSINS. Dedicated by express permission to Her Majesty the Queen. Royal 4to. cloth extra, gilt leaves, price 21s. ; or, in half-morocco, price 25s.

'IN MEMORIAM.' Printed on hand-made paper, with a Miniature Portrait in *cau forte* by Le Rat, after a Photograph by the late Mrs. Cameron. Parchment, price 6s. ; vellum, price 7s. 6d.

TENNYSON FOR THE YOUNG AND FOR RECITATION. Specially arranged. Fcp. 8vo. price 1s. 6d.

AN INDEX TO 'IN MEMORIAM.' Fcp. 8vo. cloth limp, price 2s.

THE TENNYSON BIRTHDAY BOOK. Edited by EMILY SHAKESPEAR. 32mo. cloth limp, 2s. ; cloth extra, 3s.

*A Superior Edition, printed in red and black, on antique paper specially prepared. Small crown 8vo. cloth extra, gilt leaves, price 5s. ; and in various calf and morocco bindings.

BINDING SECT. AUG 31 1965

PR
5550
E78

Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson,
baron
Works



PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

42 X

